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Wm. W. Orwell

THE

WORKS OF EDMUND BURKE,

WITH A MEMOIR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LIFE OF EDMUND BURKE.

LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE was the second son of a respectable attorney at Dublin, and his mother came of the ancient family of the Nagles. He was born on the 1st of January, (old style,) in the year 1730; and when very young, was sent to the school of Balytore, in the north of Ireland, then kept by Abraham Shackleton, a member of the Society of Friends, or, as they are commonly called, Quakers. Shackleton was a classical scholar of considerable eminence, and a man of enlarged mind, who devoted himself to the improvement of his pupils with indefatigable application and conscientious integrity. His seminary was the nursery of many great characters, who have figured conspicuously at the bar, in the church, and the senate. Here BURKE laid in a solid foundation of learning; and, besides Greek and Latin, his exercises in which gave him a decided superiority over all his contemporaneous students, he applied to the reading of the finest English authors both in prose and verse. Of his early habits or favorite pursuits at this period of his life, however, we know but little; for those writers who have professed to give the most ample and exact memoir of this great man, were totally ignorant of his private history, and even unacquainted with his person; whence their accounts of his youthful occupations may safely be passed over as the fictions of conjectural biography. Yet it is certain that the attainments of BURKE, while at the school of Balytore, were extensive and valuable; and it is equally honorable to him and his preceptor, that through life they mutually respected each other, which was manifested by the correspondence carried on between the son and successor of Abraham Shackleton and the illustrious pupil of his venerable father.

Before EDMUND BURKE left this school, his elder brother died; which event, is said to have occasioned his removal to Trinity College, Dublin; but this is a mistake, for he was now of an age to be transplanted thither, and as his original destination was the law, the change that had occurred made no alteration in the views of his father. At college he had Goldsmith for one of his cotemporaries, who has been frequently heard to declare that BURKE gave no extraordinary promise of superior talents while at the university. But veracity was unfortunately not among the leading virtues of Goldsmith; and it is well known, that whenever literary reputation came in the way of that ingenious, but eccentric, man, envy always got the better of good nature. Goldsmith could not endure the praises bestowed upon another for talents which he fancied no one possessed in a higher degree than himself. All his intimates were sensible of this failing, but as it was a weakness without malevolence, his harmless vanity only excited their mirth, and no one ever thought it worth his while to resent his petulance. The observation of Goldsmith, therefore, respecting the academical honors of his friend, is in itself undeserving of notice; but since it has been brought forward, truth requires that it should be repelled; and this is easily done, for the late Dr. Thomas Leland, a much better judge of learning than Goldsmith, never mentioned the name of EDMUND BURKE without a fond recurrence to the brilliant emanations of his opening genius, witnessed *inter sylvas academi*, when he was himself a fellow and tutor of Trinity College.

A little before he left the university, BURKE gave a happy display of his talent for imitative composition, in a series of essays, written so closely in the manner of Charles Lucas, a political apothecary of Dublin, that while they imposed upon the admirers of that noisy patriot, they at the same time turned the principles of their idol into ridicule, by exposing the consequences which necessarily flowed from them. This Lucas was a turbulent demagogue, who affected the character of a reformer, and so far succeeded, as first to become an object of prosecution, which made him popular; then he procured a doctor's degree from a Scotch university; next got himself chosen an alderman of Dublin; after which he obtained a seat in the Irish House of Commons, and then sunk again into his original obscurity and contempt.

Victory over such an opponent as this could hardly be productive of glory, and therefore it is not to be wondered that these early effusions of BURKE's versatile powers should long since have been consigned to oblivion: neither perhaps is it to be regretted, that hitherto none of the hunters of literary relics should have succeeded in bringing them to light. It is deserving of remark, however, that the only controversies in which BURKE has been known to have engaged, had for their object the detection of sophistry, and the prevention of anarchy.

He was now in his twentieth year, and from this period to his settlement in England, a chasm occurs in his history which we have not the means of filling up satisfactorily. Some of his biographers assert, that he came to London direct from college, while others assert, that he went first to Glasgow, where he offered himself as a candidate for the professorship of logic in that university, being induced so to do by seeing a placard affixed to the gate of the old college, inviting a competition for the vacant chair, although the successor was already privately chosen. BURKE, it seems, if we are to believe the tale, was ignorant of this esoteric method of determining an academical appointment, and therefore tendered his services, in the mere confidence of his qualifications for the place, without making any inquiry as to forms, or exerting what interest he could make among the electors. That under such circumstances he was unsuccessful need not to be wondered at; and it would have been surprising indeed, if the event had proved otherwise, considering the youth of the candidate, and his being a total stranger to the university. But though we have not the means of refuting the story, entirely, by direct proof, the improbability of it may easily be shown; for in the year 1751, Adam Smith was elected professor of logic, and the year following he removed to the chair of moral philosophy, then vacant by the death of Dr. Francis Hutcheson.

It must have been on this occasion therefore that BURKE became, if ever he did become, candidate for a professorship at Glasgow, and yet he was at this time only twenty-two years of age, and without a degree, in any faculty, to warrant his pretensions. But farther, when Smith published in 1759, his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," Hume wrote him a long letter, in which among other literary intelligence, he speaks of BURKE, as an ingenious young Irishman, hitherto unknown and recently started into notice, yet without once adverting to his having been a competitor for the logical professorship, a circumstance which he would hardly have omitted to mention, if it had only been for the purpose of assisting his friend's memory.

Early in 1753, BURKE was in London, as a student of the Middle Temple, where he applied to the law with his wonted assiduity; but as his finances were extremely narrow, he had recourse to his genius to supply the deficiency of fortune, in other words, he laboured for the booksellers, and wrote a variety of pieces, chiefly in the fleeting periodical works of the day, though now it would be utterly impossible to ascertain any of these fugitive productions of his pen; for such was the flexibility of his powers, in adapting his style to the occasion, that his performances, unlike those of his great friend Johnson, are not to be traced by the artificial construction of the sentences or the singular tenuity of the reasoning. While BURKE was thus endeavouring, with laudable diligence to eke out a scanty maintenance by the efforts of his pen, the public attention was drawn to the writings and character of Bolinbroke, who had but recently quitted a scene where he had played many parts, with more splen-

dour than credit. This man, as if he had owed mankind a grudge for those disappointments, which were solely owing to his own want of principle, left behind him a magazine of mischief, entrusted to the care of one of his most hopeful pupils, for publication. Mallet, the heir to this precious deposit, gave out such reports of the contents, as by exciting the fears of the pious, and the expectations of sceptics, were best adapted to fill his pockets at the expense of credulity. On the day when the cargo of infidelity was to be opened to the public, Mallet, with unblushing impudence, dared to exclaim in the shop of the publisher, while looking at his watch, "In half an hour, Christianity will tremble." Though this impious boast soon terminated in disgrace and mortification, it is certain that the friends of religion were for a time greatly alarmed, not for the cause of truth, which they knew to be impregnable, but for the welfare of society. A host of writers, therefore, came forward to refute the sophistry contained in the posthumous works of Bolinbroke; which in a short space sunk into contempt. While, however, they yet hovered above the chaos of night, and appeared portentous of incalculable evils, Mr. Burke, then young and unknown to the world, hit upon a method of attack, that evinced his own incomparable powers, and completely exposed the empty pretensions of the deceased infidel. Early in 1756, he published, "A Vindication of Natural Society; or a View of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from every species of Artificial Society. In a letter to Lord —— By a late Noble Writer." The style of Bolinbroke, lofty, declamatory and rapid, is not easy of imitation, yet so closely was it caught in the present instance, that many persons were deceived into the belief, that the pamphlet was a genuine production of this celebrated nobleman; and some there were who actually praised it above his best performances. It was soon discovered, however, by men of deeper judgment, that the anonymous author had a better object in view, than that of availing himself of a popular name to impose an ingenious fraud upon the public. They saw in this imitation of Bolinbroke, the best confutation of his delusive mode of reasoning, by the application of it to a point of experience, in which all men are personally interested, and of which there are few who cannot form a correct opinion. The sceptical pretender to philosophy, in his attempts to overthrow all religion, whether natural or revealed, drew his arguments entirely from the abuses which superstition, fanaticism, and craft, have, in various ages, devised and established as of divine prescription. This fallacious mode of reasoning, indeed, was not new, but it was artfully adapted to cheat people of light minds out of their faith, by persuading them that the corruptions so prominently exhibited, were the necessary consequences of the doctrines which they had been accustomed to regard as of sacred authority. Bolinbroke's rhetorical genius gave him many advantages in throwing a delusive glare over his parodoxes; and it was, therefore, reasonable to apprehend that the boldness of his assertions, and the examples adduced for their support, would furnish the licentious with arguments, which though they had not wit enough to find them out by their own exertions, they might be able to apply with destructive effect, to stagger the principles of others. As an antidote to this poison, therefore, Mr. Burke adopted Bolinbroke's own plan of reasoning, and employed it to shew that the same energies which were used for the destruction of religion, might be directed with equal success for the subversion of government; and that specious arguments might be adduced against those things, which they who doubt of everything else, will never permit to be questioned.

With this view the "Vindication of Natural Society" came out, to convince mankind, that if Revelation is an imposture, the association of men in greater or lesser communities is an evil; and that if the one be, as the unbelievers say it is, a tyranny over minds, the other is, in an equal or rather a greater degree, a pernicious despotism over persons.

To support this paradox, which reduces mankind at once to the savage state, it was indispensable that the author should be dogmatic in his assertions, vehement in his language, and copious in his illustrations, otherwise he would have failed in his design, and his imitation, instead of counteracting, would rather have strengthened the sophisms of Bolinbroke. Yet it is too remarkable to be passed

over in silence, that at a subsequent period, when the French anarchists were busily engaged in the work of demoralization, some of their ardent admirers in this country, presumed to republish the "Vindication of Natural Society," as a piece of serious argument, and thus endeavoured to pervert the irony into a weapon of deadly malignity against the principles which it was constructed to defend. The ravages of war, and the other calamities which the author of the tract has so forcibly pourtrayed, these visionaries, to call them by no worse a name, would fain ascribe to the social state and the legislative principle, as the necessary results of what they are pleased to deem an unnatural compact, and an arbitrary imposition. All this might have passed as the dream of political madness, had it not been for the barefaced impudence of pressing BURKE into a service which no man ever held in greater abhorrence, and which he, in this early production of his pen, actually held up to public ridicule.

While the imitation of Bolinbroke engaged the public attention, and continued to be the subject of general discourse, the Author was busily employed in conducting through the press, a performance of another description, entitled, "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful." This elegant disquisition which appeared without a name at the beginning of 1757, is divided into five parts; the first is devoted to an examination of the passions immediately connected with, and excited by, the two objects of investigation; in the second and third the Author enters into a minute discussion of the properties of those things in nature, which produce in us ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. The fourth is directed to the physical cause by which those properties in things are fitted to raise correspondent affections in the mind; and in the last he considers the operation of words.

The inquiry opens by establishing the doctrine of a distinction between positive and relative pain and pleasure; after which the passions are reduced to two heads, those of self-preservation, and those of society. To the first of these principles are referred all the passions which have their origin in positive pain, and relative pleasure; while to the latter are assigned all the relative pains and positive pleasures. Hence it is inferred that the former is the source of the Sublime, as the latter is of the Beautiful.

Under the head of Society, the author considers three passions, as those which cause the greatest part of the pleasure, which we take in the fine arts, namely, Sympathy, Imitation, and Ambition. The second part of the inquiry opens with a definition of the passion, caused by the great and sublime in nature, and which in its highest degree is astonishment, or "that state of the soul wherein all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror." This leads the author to the consideration of Terror, as being in some mode or other, the great instrument in producing the Sublime, by exalting small, and increasing the effects of large, objects. This position is illustrated by many apposite examples, particularly by the noble description of Death, in Milton, a portrait which is justly said to "astonish with its gloomy pomp and expressive uncertainty." The inquirer then enters more fully and minutely, into a discussion of the difference between Clearness and Obscurity, for the purpose of proving that the latter generates more sublime ideas than the former. "It is our ignorance of things," says he, "that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions. Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little. It is thus with the vulgar, and all men are as the vulgar in what they do not understand. The ideas of eternity and infinity, are among the most affecting we have; and yet perhaps there is nothing of which we really understand so little, as of infinity and eternity." Having fixed this principle firmly by uncontested experience, and an appeal to universal feeling, the author resolves all general privations into causes of the Sublime; such as Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude, Silence, and Extent. To the idea of Vastness, he refers in some degree another impression, that of Infinity which arises when we do not see the bounds of any large object, or when its parts are so continued to any indefinite number, that the imagination meets no check to hinder its extending them at pleasure.

Having examined extension, the author proceeds to consider Light and Colours. He observes that in general, Darkness is a more sublime idea than Light, because

the latter unless it be unusually splendid, is of too common occurrence to affect the mind. On the same principle he makes dusky colours, or at least those which are very strong, causes of the Sublime in preference to those which are light and brilliant.

We are next called to the other senses, the principal of which is Hearing; and here, conformable to the general doctrine, great loudness is stated to be grand in the highest degree, while intermitting sounds, the cries of animals, and sudden silence are considered, according to circumstances, as accessory causes of the Sublime. The fourth part of the Inquiry treats of the connexion which subsists between certain qualities in bodies, and particular emotions of the human mind, in order to discover the efficient cause of the Sublime and Beautiful. In the course of this abstruse disquisition, the bodily effects of Pain and Terror are described, from whence arises a question, how anything allied to such impressions can be productive of delight. In answer to this, the author observes, that inaction is a very noxious principle, and the cause of many dangerous distempers by the languor it occasions; that exercise which resembles labor and pain, in being an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles, is the best cure for dejection and spleen, and that therefore it is accompanied with a degree of pleasure.

After this the nature of Vision comes under examination, in order to shew how bodies of vast dimensions, are capable of exciting the contraction or tension of the nerves; which property is attributed to the impressions made on the eye, by the rays reflected back upon it from those objects.

The Inquiry is next directed to the nature of Succession, and the uniformity of Sounds in order to explain their effects, and the analogy between them and visible things. Our author now enters into contact with Locke on the subject of Darkness, which that great writer says, does not naturally convey an idea of terror. Mr. Burke, on the contrary, maintains that there is an association which makes obscurity terrible, and he supports his opinion by an appeal to experience; for in utter darkness, it is impossible to know in what degree of safety we stand; we are ignorant of the objects that surround us; we may every moment strike against some dangerous obstructions; we may fall down a precipice, the first step we take; and if an enemy approach, we know not in what quarter to defend ourselves; in such a case, strength is no sure protection; wisdom can only act by guess; the boldest are staggered; and he who would pray for nothing else is forced to pray for light.

Having largely explicated the physical cause of the passion, in which the principle of sublimity originates, the inquirer proceeds to a consideration of Love, as the passion naturally produced by Beauty: and here among various remarks of uncommon force and elegance, is one on the contrast between small and vast objects, which cannot easily be paralleled by anything in the writings of ancient or modern philosophers.

The fifth part on the influence of Words, is no less argumentative and original than the rest of the Inquiry. In this part, words are divided into three clases.—The first class comprehends those which are aggregates, or such as represent many simple ideas united by nature to form one determinate composition, as man, horse, tree, &c. The second class consists of words, which stand for one simple idea of such compounds and no more, as red, blue, round, square, and the like; these are called simple abstract words. The third class is formed by an arbitrary union of both the others, and of the various relations between them, in greater or less degrees of complexity; as virtue, honor, persuasion, magistrate, and the like. These last are the compound abstract words, of which the author says, that not being real essences, they hardly cause any real ideas. This, however, is a doubtful position, and somewhat paradoxical, for surely, though determinate images cannot be raised in the mind by such terms, simply expressed, it seems too far from a just conclusion, that no ideas whatever are suggested by them. Virtue for instance is a word that cannot excite an image, or be embodied, as it were, to the mind's eye, yet where is the person of understanding, who is destitute of an idea of what is meant by the expression, though it is out of his power to give a precise definition of it.

There is another questionable assertion in this part, and that is where the inge-

nious author says, "So little does Poetry depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy, if this were the necessary result of all description—because that union of affecting words, which is the most powerful of all poetical instruments, would frequently lose its force along with its propriety, and consistency, if the sensible images were always excited."

In opposition to this doctrine, it is sufficient to adduce the authority of Longinus, to whom alone, as a philosophical critic, is Burke inferior. That elegant writer in his section on imagery, says, "Visions, which by some are called images, contribute very much to the weight, magnificence, and force of composition. The name of an image is generally given to any idea, however represented to the mind, which is communicable to others by discourse: but a more particular sense of it has now become prevalent: when for instance, the imagination is so warmed and affected, that you seem to behold yourself, the very things you are describing, and to display them to the life, before the eyes of an audience. Rhetorical and poetical images, however, have a different object; the design of the latter is surprise, that of the former is perspicuity."

Thus the greatest critic of antiquity, held imagery to be the highest effect of mental exertion; whereas our illustrious modern will not allow that Poetry can with any propriety be called an art of imitation; in which opinion, we believe, he has had but few if any followers. Nor indeed has the principal doctrine of his admirable work, that of making Terror the great cause of the Sublime, been suffered to pass without contradiction, and some writers of late, have held it up to ridicule in a manner, which shows more malignity than acumen. To the second edition of the Inquiry, the author prefixed an excellent discourse concerning Taste, which faculty he does not presume to describe by a formal definition, though he ascribes to it the general power of forming a judgment on works of imagination and the arts.

In the same year with this original Treatise, came out, a compilation in two volumes, entitled, "An Account of the European Settlements in America;" which the public voice long concurred in ascribing to Mr. Burke, without any contradiction of it on his part; nor was it till sometime after his demise, that his right to the work was called in question. That the performance was worthy of his pen, few persons who have read it carefully will venture to deny; and certain it is that the ablest judges of literary composition, and those the most intimate with Mr. Burke, very readily acquiesced in the general opinion of its origin. The Abbe Raynal, in particular, was so sensible of the value of this history of the European Colonies in America, as to incorporate almost the whole of it in his own elaborate and philosophical work on the Indies. Another publication, but of a more permanent character, which at this period did credit to the fertile genius and indefatigable industry of Burke, was the Annual Register. There is reason to believe, that the idea of this valuable compilation, suggested itself during the progress of the preceding history, occasioned by the difficulties which the author found in his research, after the facts necessary for the elucidation of his subject. Upon this he drew up the plan of a yearly volume, to contain a digested record of foreign and domestic events; an arrangement of public papers with other documentary matter; and extracts from new books of importance, illustrative of the literary, scientific, and political history of the times. The plan being submitted to Dodsley, was readily adopted by that active publisher, and in the month of June 1759, the first volume made its appearance, all the original matter of which was furnished by Mr. Burke, who continued to write the historical part, and to superintend the whole collection for many years afterwards.

These laborious exertions, which had for their object, the attainment of an honorable independence, produced a debility in the frame of Mr. Burke, that gave great alarm to his friends. Among these was Dr. Christopher Nugent, a physician, and brother to Dr. Thomas Nugent, an author by profession, but chiefly known to the literary world by his excellent translations. Both these gentlemen were the countrymen of Burke, great admirers of his talents, and zealous in promoting his interests. On perceiving

the inroad which an incessant application to study had made in his constitution, the benevolent physician earnestly intreated him to quit his chambers in the Temple, and take apartments in his house. This proposition was complied with, and the good effects of it soon appeared in the renovation of health and strength. But another consequence resulted from it, and that was a sympathetic affection between the invalid, and the daughter of Dr. Nugent; which, within a short space, terminated in a marriage; and though the young lady had not a shilling of portion, a happier couple never existed, insomuch that to the end of his days, Mr. Burke was wont to say to his friends, that "In all the anxious moments of his public life, every care vanished when he entered his own house."

But though this alliance was not lucrative, it was extremely fortunate, by bringing our author into an extensive circle of acquaintance consisting of persons in the highest stations, and others of established credit in the world of letters. The benefit of these connexions was quickly felt, and when the earl of Halifax was appointed at the beginning of October, 1761, to the viceroyalty of Ireland, Mr. Burke obtained a situation in his suite as one of his secretaries. The government of lord Halifax lasted only a few months, he being recalled the following summer to take an active part in the administration at home: and Mr. Burke returned with him, having previously secured a pension of two hundred a year, on the Irish establishment. It does not appear that he enjoyed any preferment in England, at this time, though his friend William Gerard Hamilton continued in favour with Lord Halifax, and was appointed his under secretary of state. That gentleman is said to have soon afterwards quarrelled with Burke; who in consequence threw up his pension, and once more had recourse to his pen for a support. The feelings of the public, were at this period much agitated by the ascendency of lord Bute, and the prospect of a peace, so that the field of politics presented an abundance of matter for the exercise of a mind stored with reading, inured to writing, and fertile in argument.

Burke, however, had the good sense and magnanimity, notwithstanding the neglect which he had experienced, to avoid the vulgar topic of the day, and confined himself to a subject of general interest. He entered into the question of peace with ardour, and in some able pamphlets, endeavoured to impress upon the minds of ministers, the necessity of adding to our colonial strength in the West Indies, by extending our possessions in the vicinity. Most of the tracts which he published on this occasion are now lost, or forgotten; since up to this period, and beyond it, he never affixed his name to any of his publications. But the performances of which we are speaking, were known to Johnson, through whom the author became introduced to Mr. William Fitzherbert, the father of lord St. Helens. This gentleman who was member of parliament for the town of Derby, brought Mr. Burke acquainted with the marquis of Rockingham and lord Verney, at the very time when the former of those noblemen became the head of a party, which in a short time effected a change in the administration. The measures of Mr. George Grenville, particularly in regard to the imposition of a Stamp Duty in America, giving general offence, occasioned his dismissal from office at the beginning of 1765; and in the new arrangement which took place, the marquis of Rockingham was made first lord of the treasury. This was a brilliant prospect to Mr. Burke, for he was immediately appointed private secretary to the prime minister, as his brother William was to general Conway, one of the secretaries of state. The same year, Mr. Edmund Burke was elected into parliament for the borough of Wendover, in Buckinghamshire, on the interest of lord Verney. This administration was formed under the mediation of the duke of Cumberland, with the co-operation of the duke of Newcastle, who it was expected would have taken the lead in the new cabinet. But the old statesman declined the distinction, when the honour was offered to him, and the report went current at the time, that during the settlement, he plainly told the marquis of Rockingham, that he must be first lord of the treasury, and that when his lordship objected to the appointment, on the ground of inexperience, his grace facetiously answered: "It does not signify, marquis, first lord of the treasury you must be; care shall be taken to appoint proper persons to assist your lordship in the business

of your department; and as to the disposal of the places in your lordship's power, if you are not qualified there, I am ready to undertake that part of your office myself."

But though this administration was formed on broad principles, and comprised men whose integrity could not be called in question, it was far from giving satisfaction to the people, who were then, as they had been indeed for the space of four years prior, in a state of high political fever. Much scurrility was thrown out at the expense of some of the members, and among the rest the two BURKES came in for their share of abuse. It was roundly averred that EDMUND was a concealed jesuit, and that William had borne arms in the rebellion of 1745; though it was well known that the former was educated first in a Protestant seminary, and next in the college of Dublin, and that his brother was not more than twelve years old at the period when he was said to have joined the standard of the Pretender. This miserable calumny arose from the circumstance of the marriage of EDMUND BURKE into a Roman Catholic family, but all the branches of his own, as well as himself, were members of the Established Church.

The proceedings of this administration belong properly to history, and could not well be compressed into a narrative of this brief description. It was soon obvious, however, that the fabric, whatever might be the intentions of those who projected, or of the persons who composed it, was too feeble to last long; and the death of the duke of Cumberland within four months after its formation, gave it a shock that could not be repaired. During its existence much vigour was manifested, and many designs were laid for the correction of abuses, the encouragement of trade, and above all for the conciliation of the American colonies. But in pursuing the last measure the new ministers were very unfortunate. The Grenville party were for enforcing the Stamp Duty by coercion, not so much perhaps in regard to the lucrative advantages of that particular branch of revenue, as from a desire to carry forward a general system of colonial taxation. Mr. Pitt, and his numerous adherents, on the contrary denied the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies at all, and this conflict, upon principle, reduced the question to a serious dilemma. The administration to which Mr. BURKE belonged, were therefore involved in difficulties, out of which it was scarcely possible to escape, without giving offence at home or abroad. Something, however, was to be done, and the method adopted appeared no doubt in the minds of the projectors best calculated to allay the ferment that had been excited, and to pacify all parties on both sides of the Atlantic. But they were mistaken, for though the repeal of the Stamp Act was conciliatory, the act which accompanied it, asserting the right of parliament to legislate for the colonies in everything, only added fresh fuel to the fire. There was certainly much inconsistency in this proceeding, in which light it was viewed by the Americans, who had sense enough to perceive that it was in fact nothing more than a temporary piece of policy, intended to last just as long and no longer than as it suited the purposes of the contrivers. There were various opinions as to the direct author of this goodly scheme, but the common one hitherto has been, that it emanated from the active mind of Mr. BURKE, who certainly considered it one of the beneficial acts of the party with whom he was connected. Others, however, entertained a different opinion of its merits, and the administration from whence it proceeded became so unpopular, that within the space of twelve months it was compelled to give place to a set of men formed under the auspices of Mr. Pitt, who became a peer, and keeper of the privy seal. This change was a great blow to Mr. BURKE, who retired from office without having secured a pension; but in this disinterested conduct he did not stand alone, for the whole body of his colleagues threw up their places on the same independent principle. The new cabinet gave as little satisfaction to the nation as that which had been so ungraciously dismissed; and the earl of Chatham, who had been so long the popular favourite, was now made the object of continual abuse in pamphlets and newspapers. Even his brother-in-law, earl Temple, not only refused to take a part in this motley administration, but published a severe diatribe on the conduct of his noble relative, who was charged by him in plain terms with aiming at a perpetual dictatorship.

It was soon seen, and pretty generally admitted, that whatever errors might have been committed by the former ministers, little, if anything was gained by their removal; and though the talents of the prime mover of the machine were unquestionably great, they were rendered in a considerable degree inefficient, by the confessed imbecility of several of his associates. The description which Mr. Burke, some years afterwards in a famous speech gave of this heterogeneous composition, though highly ludicrous, was perfectly correct. Having defended the phalanx to which he belonged, and bestowed some encomiums upon the personal character of the venerable lord Chatham, he proceeded to animadvert upon his public conduct at the period in question. "For a wise man, he seemed to me at the time," says Mr. Burke, "to be governed too much by general maxims. I speak with the freedom of history, and I hope without offence. One or two of these maxims, flowing from an opinion, not the most indulgent to our unhappy species, and surely a little too general, led him into measures, that were greatly mischievous to himself; and, for that reason among others, perhaps fatal to his country; measures, the effects of which, I am afraid, are for ever incurable. He made an administration so chequered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified mosaic; such a tessellated pavement without cement, here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers; king's friends and republicans; whigs and tories; treacherous friends and open enemies; that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on. The colleagues, whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, 'Sir, your name?—Sir, you have the advantage of me; Mr. Such-a-one—I beg a thousand pardons.'—I venture to say, it did so happen, that persons had a single office divided between them, who had never spoke to each in their lives until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points, in the same truckle bed."

Against this administration while it lasted, Mr. Burke directed the artillery of his eloquence, with unceasing vigour in the house of commons, and at the same time followed up his attacks with equal power through the medium of the press.

Immediately after his dismissal from office, he published "A Short History of a late Short Administration," which was printed on a broad sheet, and very widely distributed throughout the empire, in order to make the nation sensible of the great loss it had sustained, by the extinction of measures, which had been partially commenced for the encouragement of trade, and the restoration of tranquillity.

On the rising of parliament this year, Mr. Burke finding himself disengaged from public business, visited his native island, where he renewed many of those agreeable connexions, which he had formed in his earlier years, and which, to his honor, he cherished through life, with sincere and warm affection, even when his friends became opposed to him in political sentiments.

On the dissolution of parliament, in 1768, Mr. Burke was again returned for Wendover, and it is not a little remarkable, that Mr. Fox, who now came into the house of commons for the first time, began his oratorical career by encountering the formidable powers of the man, with whom he not long afterwards formed an alliance. Mr. Fox was now an adherent of the ministers, and an opponent of those doctrines which he at a maturer age zealously defended. The great question which then divided the public, was the right of parliament to expel Wilkes for his libels. Burke took the popular side of the argument, and Fox as strenuously maintained, that the voice of the people was only to be heard in the house of commons. The nation was thrown into a violent ferment by this impolitic, though perfectly legal, measure, and while it engrossed the thoughts of all parties, a writer made his appearance, who through the medium of a newspaper, and covered with a mask that has never been removed, blew up the flame to the utmost daring of sedition.

It was very evident that the letters of Junius proceeded from one, who was well acquainted with the members of administration, and owed them a grudge for injuries, either real or imagined, which the author had received from them. The asperity he felt running through these

famous epistles, was sufficient to convince every unbiassed reader, that blighted ambition and deep resentment alone gave them birth. The ascription of them, therefore, to some member of the Rockingham party, was extremely natural; and upon whom, could the suspicion of being JUNIUS fall with so much weight of probability as on BURKE? His abilities were undoubted, his address in varying his style to suit the object he had in view was well known, his habit of writing anonymously in periodical works was no secret, and that the disappointment which he had experienced, should have soured his temper against those by whom it was occasioned, was perfectly reasonable. On all these accounts and some others, little less plausible, many scrupled not to aver that the letters of JUNIUS came from the pen of BURKE, and we know that even the acute and penetrating mind of Johnson, actually hung in suspense upon the point, until BURKE himself spontaneously disavowed them with some degree of warmth. Notwithstanding this, such is the obstinacy of credulity, attempts have been repeatedly made to establish the charge, though the persons thus uselessly employed, had no more light to throw upon the subject, than their predecessors in this idle inquiry. That BURKE was not the author of the letters, we ought to believe upon his own authority; but if that be not deemed sufficient, there is internal evidence, more than abundant to satisfy every unbiassed observer, that JUNIUS must be sought for in some other quarter.

In 1769, Mr. BURKE published, without his name, which as we have already observed was his usual practice, an elaborate reply to a pamphlet written by Mr. George Grenville, entitled "The Present State of the Nation." That gentleman drew a dismal picture of the finances of this country, and as extravagant a one of the resources of France, with a view of justifying his own measures, when in office, particularly in regard to America, and of depreciating those of the succeeding administrations.

Mr. BURKE's reply, therefore, was rather a defence of his own party, than an attack upon others; though in the treatment of his subject, which he managed with consummate ability, he overwhelmed the hostile ranks to which he was opposed, by an exuberance of wit and an irresistible body of closely connected arguments.

Soon after this, came out a pamphlet, intituled "Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents," in which Mr. BURKE attempted to show, that for several years there had existed a design to establish a double cabinet, one interior, and the other exterior; the former consisting of a secret cabal behind the throne, and the latter a servile set of ministers, subservient to their councils and disposable at their pleasure. To this cause were boldly ascribed the frequent changes that had taken place, and the consequent distractions which prevailed throughout the empire.

There was, however, more rhetoric than truth in this statement, but the writer's aim was to urge the combination of an open aristocracy of power, property, and talents, on popular principles, as a check upon the crown. This plan was nothing more, indeed, than a recurrence to the old system of governing the national councils by the weight of party, which, in the estimation of many good friends to the constitutional liberty, was to the full, as objectionable as that of pretended favouritism.

Though this performance of Mr. BURKE is beautifully fascinating as a composition, it is now read only as an elegant declamation, founded upon a visionary basis, and calculated to serve the purposes of a political junto, who were exasperated by the loss of place, and wished to make the world believe, that the disgrace they had suffered arose from the machinations of a secret faction behind the throne.

Mr. BURKE, however, lived long enough to see and acknowledge that the cause to which he had ascribed the public discontents, was the mere creature of the imagination; and that no such private council as the one described by him ever had an existence. The great earl of Chatham often made the same declaration, though he too, for political reasons, at one period gave countenance to the current report.

About the time when Mr. BURKE's pamphlet came out, the duke of Grafton, unable to resist the combination of talent that was made against his administration, retired from office, and was succeeded by lord North, whose measures gave as little satisfaction as those of his predecessor. Notwithstanding this, that nobleman continued to hold the helm for several years, amidst a conflict of the most tremendous

magnitude. As BURKE was the most powerful of his assailants, so the brightest of his speeches were those which he delivered in the house of commons, on the disputes with America. He ridiculed lord North for his propositions of conciliation, and attacked him with unwearied ardour for pursuing a contest founded on the very right, which had been asserted in the declaratory act of lord Rockingham's administration, and of which there can be no doubt that Mr. BURKE was himself the author. Much, therefore, as we may admit the brilliant genius of this eloquent, and accomplished statesman, truth compels the admission that he was here, as in some other cases, palpably inconsistent.

It has often excited surprise, how a minister, of the easy and indolent temper of lord North, could stem the torrent which ran impetuously against him for so long a period. Mr. BURKE, once partly answered this question, by saying, on leaving the house after a loud and stormy debate, in which the minister preserved his equanimity and humour to the last, "Well, there's no denying it, gentlemen, this man has certainly more wit and good nature in him, than all of us put together."

At the close of the year 1772, Mr. BURKE visited the French capital, where he was introduced to most of the men of letters, and some of the highest persons in the church and state, who all vied with each other in showing their respects to the talents of the illustrious stranger. During his stay at Paris, this acute observer who made human nature his study, could not help seeing that an extensive confederacy was going on against religion, and he knew that if it succeeded, the most fearful consequences would result to the injury of society. On his return home, he revolved the subject in his mind, and the more he considered it, the more alarmed were his fears; on which account he took an opportunity of pointing out the progress of Atheism to his countrymen, and particularly the government, as a matter calling for the most vigilant watchfulness. Mr. BURKE in addressing the house, observed, that he was not over-fond of calling in the aid of the secular arm, to suppress doctrines and opinions; but he thought that if ever it were to be raised, it should be against those enemies of their kind, who would take from man the noblest prerogative of his nature, that of being a religious animal.

It is somewhat remarkable, that Dr. Priestley made a similar observation on the state of France; for when he was there about the same time with Mr. BURKE, the members of the Academy of Sciences to whom he was introduced, wondered how a man of his free sentiments could believe in a Deity.

Having mentioned Priestley, it may be proper to remark, that he and BURKE were at this time on terms of intimacy, having contracted an acquaintance at the table of lord Shelburne with whom the doctor then lived as an amanuensis. The following anecdote, related by the doctor is worth inserting in this place.—"On the morning of the day, January 29, 1774, when the cause of Dr. Franklin was to be heard before the privy council, in regard to the complaints of the province of Massachusetts against their governor, I met Mr. BURKE in Parliament Street, accompanied by Dr. Douglas, afterwards bishop of Salisbury. After introducing us to each other as men of letters, he asked me whither I was going? I said I could tell him whither I *wished* to go. He then asked me where that was, I said to the privy council, but that I was afraid I could not get admission. He then desired me to go along with him. Accordingly I did; but when we got to the anti-room, we found it quite filled with persons as desirous of getting admission as ourselves. Seeing this, I said, we should never get through the crowd. He said, 'Give me your arm;' and locking it fast in his, he soon made his way to the door of the privy council. I then said, 'Mr. BURKE you are an excellent leader.' He replied, 'I wish other persons thought so too.' After waiting a short time, the door of the privy council opened, and we entered the first, when Mr. BURKE took his stand behind the first chair next to the president, and I behind that the next to his." What follows is a narrative of the proceedings, and no way relative to the subject of this memoir.

At the close of the session of parliament this year, a dissolution took place, in which Mr. BURKE, who had hitherto sat for Wendover, was now proposed to the freemen of Malton, in Yorkshire, upon the interest of the marquis of Rockingham. The election had but just finish-

ed when a deputation of merchants came from Bristol to invite Mr. Burke to become a candidate for the representation of that opulent city. This was an unexpected offer, but one that was too honorable and important to be slighted.

Courtesy, however, required an attention to forms, and Mr. Burke went to consult his friends, who were then sat down to dinner, upon the line of conduct he should pursue. There was but one opinion on the matter, for all present were attached to lord Rockingham, and the present was an opportunity of strengthening the common cause in which they were all concerned. Accordingly a compliance with the Whigs of Bristol was unanimously recommended, and Mr. Burke, after taking a short repast, threw himself into a post chaise, and travelling night and day, reached the place of his destination on the 13th of October, which was the sixth day of the poll. The candidates were lord Clare, (afterwards earl Nugent) and Mr. Brickdale on the Tory or High Church interest, and Mr. Cruger and Mr. Burke supported by the dissenters who then formed, as they ever have done, a commanding influence in the corporation and representation of that great city. The contest on this occasion was unusually severe, but it terminated after a scrutiny, in the complete triumph of the popular candidates.

Mr. Burke's speeches to the electors were very much and deservedly admired, so, that though he was the second in the return, he entirely eclipsed his colleague. Cruger was an American merchant, who by running away with the daughter of an eminent banker, had acquired considerable property at Bristol, which with his being a native of New York, procured him an interest that he was far from being entitled to, either on the score of principle or of ability. Of the extent of his talent he gave a curious specimen, when after an eloquent harangue made on the Exchange, by his associate, finding that a speech was called for from himself, he said, "Gentlemen, I say ditto to Mr. Burke, again I say, ditto." This was at the beginning of the election, but at the close of it he was somewhat better prepared, and told his constituents that their will should be his rule, and that in all things he should vote according to their directions. This slavish principle Mr. Burke, when it came to his turn to speak, manfully refused to admit, and for so doing he assigned reasons, which the writer of this sketch happens to know, carried conviction home to many of his hearers, though they were before of a different opinion. The substance of his argument was this: "Government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; but what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion, in which one set of men deliberate and another decide? and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments? Parliament" said Mr. Burke, "is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole; where not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole."

To this sound, constitutional doctrine, Mr. Burke invariably adhered through the whole of his parliamentary history, though some perhaps will be inclined to think that in submitting to be a partizan he deviated nearly as much on the other hand from the true principle of patriotism, which ought to distinguish all the members of a national council. It is a question not easily answered, whether the man who enlists in the trammels of a party, has more claim to public respect, than he who takes the dictum of his constituents for the absolute rule of his conduct. Certain it is, however, that though the one has more scope for the display of his powers than the other, it is with an ill grace he professes to be independent, while to use the language of Goldsmith concerning his friend Burke, "He gives up to party what was meant for mankind."

One of the first acts of this great man after taking his seat in the ensuing sessions, was to bring forward a plan of conciliation with America; the basis of which was a renunciation of the right of parliament, to lay a tax upon the colonies, and allowing to the provincial assemblies the privilege of making such grants as should suit their respective circumstances. This scheme, feasible as it might appear to the

projector and his friends, failed, however, to make an impression upon the house, and therefore all the propositions founded upon it, were rejected by a great majority. When, in the course of the same session, the measure of introducing German troops was adopted without the consent of parliament, Mr. BURKE lifted up his voice with powerful eloquence against the unconstitutional proceeding, and in answer to Wedderburne, the solicitor general, who defended it in an elaborate speech, which he concluded by moving the previous question; he observed, that the learned gentleman had ransacked history, statutes and journals, and had taken a very long journey, as was usual with him, through which he did not wish to follow him, but he was always glad to meet him on his return home. "Let us" said BURKE, "strip off this learned foliage entirely from his argument; let us unswathe this Egyptian corpse, and bereave it of its salt, gum, and mummy, and see what sort of a dry skeleton it is underneath—nothing but a precedent! The gentleman asserts, that a bill only can declare the consent of parliament—not an address—not a resolution of the house;—yet he thinks that a resolution of the house would, in this case, be better than a bill of indemnity: so that we find a bill is nothing, a resolution is nothing—nay, I fear our liberty is nothing: and that ere long, our rights, freedom, and spirit, nay this house itself will vanish, in a previous question."

After opposing in vain, the measures taken by government for the subjugation of the colonies, Mr. BURKE began to relax in his efforts, and even to be less regular in his attendance in the house; in justification of which conduct, and at the same time to express his entire sense of the question then at issue, he wrote at the beginning of 1777, a letter to the sheriffs of Bristol, which was soon afterwards printed with the consent, and most probably at the desire of the author. Hitherto perfect harmony had subsisted between him and his constituents, but within a short time after this, a serious difference arose, which instead of being healed, became wider by the attempts made at explanation. The first occasion of dislike given by BURKE to the citizens of Bristol, was his voting in favour of the act for extending the Irish trade. Such was the narrow spirit of the English merchants, but particularly those of Bristol, that they set every engine at work to prevent a measure, which was called for by the exigency of the times, as much as by the principle of natural justice. BURKE was instructed by the electors of Bristol to oppose the bill, but he had the manliness to venture upon risking their displeasure, rather than pursue, out of mere policy, a line of conduct which his conscience disapproved. He wrote two letters on the subject, one to the heads of a private commercial house, and the other to the master of the company of merchant adventurers, in both which he laid down the most solid maxims of trade, and advanced the most satisfactory reasons in support of the legislative grant, which they reprobated.

These arguments, however, were thrown away upon minds that viewed every object through the discoloured medium of prejudice and self-interest. Two other steps of Mr. BURKE, which while they did him honour, gave great offence to the good people of Bristol; where the part he took in regard to lord Beauchamp's bill for the Relief of Debtors, and his vigorous support of sir George Savile's act in behalf of the Roman Catholics. This last measure, though nothing more than what had been long called for by every principle of humanity, policy, and right, produced in England and Scotland, that shameful combination of sectarian bigotry, which, under the specious name of the Protestant Association, brought an indelible stain upon the country, in the riots of the year 1780. Just before the occurrence of those dreadful outrages, Mr. BURKE brought forward, and carried his motion for leave to bring in a bill "For the better regulation of his majesty's civil establishments, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppression of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places, and for applying the monies saved thereby for the public service."

But though successful in this popular object, it had not the effect of securing his return for Bristol at the election which took place in the same year. On his arrival in that city after the dissolution of parliament, he found an opposition raised against him, which, neither the power of his eloquence nor the interest of his friends could overcome. The speech of Mr. BURKE on the hustings, in vindication of

his parliamentary conduct, was indeed a masterly piece of declamation, but it made so little impression upon the hearers, that after a short struggle he deemed it prudent to retire from the contest. A seat, however, was already provided for him by his great patron, and Malton, which he had originally quitted for Bristol, now returned him without any difficulty. It merits observation in this place, that notwithstanding the rejection of Mr. Burke by the electors, the corporate body of Bristol, for the most part, adhered inflexibly to him, and of this attachment they gave a striking proof not long afterwards, in choosing his brother Richard to be their Recorder on the death of Dunning, lord Ashburton.

The American War, after seven years unsuccessful struggle, was now drawing to that point which many sagacious persons had foreseen and predicted.

On the 27th of February, 1782, general Conway moved in the commons, a resolution "That it is the opinion of this house, that a further continuance of an offensive war in America, for the purpose of subduing by force, the revolted colonies, is totally impracticable, inasmuch as it weakens that force which we ought to employ against our European enemies, and which is contrary to his majesty's declaration in his most gracious speech from the throne, where he expresses a wish to restore peace and tranquillity." This resolution, after a long and warm debate, was carried by a majority of two hundred and thirty-four, against two hundred and fifteen; and the next day, Mr. Burke communicated the intelligence to Dr. Franklin, who had a little before requested his interest in negociating the exchange of Mr. Henry Laurens, then in the Tower, for general Burgoyne, who had been taken prisoner at Saratoga. In answer to the doctor, then at Paris, Mr. Burke wrote the following letter:—

"Dear Sir,

Your most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowledgment which was so justly due to it. But Providence has well supplied my deficiencies; and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory than at the time of my receipt of your letter, I dared to promise myself it could be. I congratulate you, as the friend of America, I trust, as not the enemy of England, I am sure, as the friend of mankind, on the resolution of the house of commons, carried by a majority of nineteen at two o'clock this morning, in a very full house. It was the declaration of two hundred and thirty-four; I think it was the opinion of the whole. I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honourable man. I am much obliged to you for the honour of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do, and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favour.

"I have the honour to be,
With the highest possible
esteem and regard, dear sir,
Your most faithful and
obedient humble servant,
EDMUND BURKE."

"*London, Charles Street,*
Feb. 28, 1782.

"General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him."

Encouraged by the advantage which they had gained in carrying this resolution, the opposition renewed their attacks upon the ministry with such vigour, that on the 20th of March, lord North announced his own resignation, and that of his colleagues in the presence of an exceedingly full house. During the adjournment which followed this notification, the marquis of Rockingham was intrusted with the arrangement of a new administration, in which Mr. Burke took his part as pay-master of the forces, with a seat in the privy council.

The first measure that occupied the attention of parliament after the recess, was the passing of an act in favour of Ireland, which was followed by a bill to dis-

qualify revenue officers for voting at elections; and on the 15th of April, Mr. Burke brought in his great plan of reform in the civil expenditure, by which, according to his statement, an actual saving was to be effected of seventy-two thousand pounds a year, with a certain prospect of increase.

Some members objected to the bill, that it fell short of the original outline; but the author of it entered into the grounds of the alterations, stating, that they had been made in compliance with the opinions of others, or from a fuller consideration of the particular cases; at the same time pledging himself, that he would be ready at all times to obey the call for prosecuting a more complete and extensive system of Reform.

This bill was followed by another for the regulation of the framer's own office, but the lateness of the season, would not allow time for the completion of all the plans of regulation and retrenchment which he had projected, and these with the other designs of the new ministry, were entirely frustrated by the demise of the marquis of Rockingham, on the 1st of July, 1782. This unfortunate event discovered the feeble texture of the administration, of which that amiable nobleman was the head; for lord Shelburne, afterwards marquis of Lansdowne, being appointed premier, without consulting the Rockingham division of the cabinet, the principals of that party immediately resigned their offices. These were, lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the exchequer, who was succeeded by Mr. Pitt; Mr. Fox, secretary of state, whose place was filled up by lord Sidney; and Mr. Burke, who gave way to his old friend colonel Barré.

After the conclusion of the general peace of 1783, a political manœuvre was played, which, though it had the effect of restoring Mr. Burke and his colleagues, for a short time, to the reins of power, brought upon them a torrent of abuse, and the double charge of duplicity and inconsistency. This was the famous coalition between them and lord North, the very statesman whose measures his new associates had for so many years reprobated with excessive violence and repeated threats of impeachment. Mr. Burke, indeed, had not marked his hostility to that nobleman with the same virulence as Mr. Fox, but, still he came in for his share of obloquy for the part which he now acted. Attempts have been made to palliate and even to defend the conduct of these great men on this occasion; but no dispassionate mind has ever been yet able to reconcile it with the pure principle of political integrity. If the pertinacity of lord North, while in power, to carry on the American war, arose, as was said, from the influence of high authority, he was not a man worthy of the public confidence, and, therefore, a junction with him was a reproach to the party who had uniformly opposed him: and if, on the other hand, the line he pursued was on his part as voluntary and iniquitous, as Mr. Fox and his friends maintained it to be, then it is impossible to justify the alliance which they made with the man, who, according to their account was deserving of the block.

The truth is, and no sophistry can repel its force, that the project of a coalition sprung from the single motive of ambition, and the desire of place. Separately the two parties were unable to attain the object, which each had in view, and therefore, in defiance of all public principle, they had recourse to this measure of an union, in full confidence, that they should be able, without difficulty, to command a majority in the house. They did so, but their triumph was of short duration, and they found that the good sense of the people is not to be imposed upon, even by the most splendid talents, when those talents are palpably employed in reconciling gross contradictions. The views of the coalesced ministers were seen through, and though a temporary ascendancy in the house of commons was obtained by them, sufficient to give them assurance, the hollowness of the foundation was soon discovered. The celebrated bill, brought in and carried through the lower house by Mr. Fox, for the better government of British India, was thrown out by the peers, and in December of the same year, a new administration was formed under Mr. Pitt, who was then no more than twenty-four years of age. The majority of the house of commons, however, continued on the side of the dismissed ministers, who, on that account, made themselves sure of displacing their adversaries, that from day to day, they peremptorily called upon the young chancellor of the exchequer to resign a seat,

which, as they said, he presumptuously held in contempt of parliament. The situation of Mr. Pitt, under such peculiar circumstances, and opposed by so formidable an array of numbers and abilities, was arduous and unparalleled. But he remained inflexible at his post, and endured the pelting of the merciless storm with undaunted firmness, till the month of May in the following year, when a dissolution of parliament gave him a signal victory over his antagonists, who were now humbled in their turn to a minority. Thus, it was Mr. Burke's fortune to be reduced again to the ranks of opposition, after taking a part in three administrations, neither of which lasted a year, and from all of which he retired without having secured either a reversionary grant or pension.

In relation to this portion of his life, we cannot avoid extracting a curious anecdote told by Dr. Priestley, who was at that time on terms of particular intimacy with Mr. Burke. "It was early in the year 1783," says the doctor, "when I lived at Birmingham, that Mr. Burke, accompanied by his son, called and spent a great part of the afternoon with me. After much general conversation, he took me aside to a small terrace in the garden in which the house stood, to tell me that lord Shelburne, who was then prime minister, finding his influence diminished, and of course his situation uncertain, had made proposals to join lord North. Having had a better opportunity of knowing the principles and character of his lordship than Mr. Burke, I seemed (as he must have thought,) a little incredulous on the subject. But before I could make any reply, he said, 'I see you do not believe me, but you may depend upon it, he has made overtures to him, and in writing:' and without any reply, I believe, on my part, (for I did not give much credit to the information) we returned to the rest of the company. However, it was not much more than a month, or six weeks, after this, before he himself did the very thing, that whether right or wrong, expedient or inexpedient, (for there were various opinions on the subject,) he at that time mentioned, as a thing so atrocious, as hardly to be credible."

However inconsistent the conduct of Mr. Burke may have been, there is no reason for calling in question his veracity in this instance; on the contrary, the character of lord Shelburne, renders the story of his proposition for a coalition with lord North, extremely probable, and it is very likely that the latter nobleman, finding himself an object of equal interest to both parties, thought it his wisest way to join the strongest side, which certainly was the Rockingham division.

It has been said, but upon what authority, does not appear, that Mr. Burke hesitated about taking a step, the hazardous nature of which he instantly perceived, and freely represented to Mr. Fox, who exerted all his eloquence to dissipate his friend's apprehensions.

The next great event in the public life of Mr. Burke, was the lengthened and laborious impeachment of Warren Hastings, governor-general of Bengal. The primary motive which gave rise to this extraordinary prosecution, has never been yet clearly developed, but that it originated with Mr. Burke is certain, and that he entered upon the subject in a hostile spirit cannot possibly be doubted. He brought forward in parliament, charges against Mr. Hastings, a considerable time previous to the return of that gentleman from India; and immediately on his arrival in 1785, the pledge which had been made to bring him before the highest tribunal of the country, was redeemed by his accuser, and ultimately carried into effect by the house of commons. In the meantime, the governor and his friends were not inactive in repelling the accusations that were from day to day voluminously heaped up by the prosecutor: but, unfortunately for Mr. Hastings, the public mind had been already prejudiced by statements, which few men even in the senate, much less therefore in the nation at large, were qualified by information to comprehend and appreciate. This was a serious disadvantage to the accused party, who saw that under such circumstances, the most justifiable and even praiseworthy acts, were liable to be perverted into crimes, by the subtile power of rhetoric, appealing to the passions, and operating upon the credulity of ignorance. Such was the case in this instance, for at that period, when it might have been expected that the people of this country were tolerably well informed on the subject of Indian history and politics, nothing in fact was less understood. The nation had

but just emerged out of a disgraceful war, and the loss of the American colonies made the public very readily believe what was boldly asserted, that an iniquitous system of oppression and rapacity had been carried on in Hindostan, which not only stained the national character, but would have the effect of putting an end to our dominion in the East for ever.

To remove this impression was almost impossible, for the nature of the tenure on which our Oriental possessions were held, could not all at once be made intelligible to minds habituated to European laws, customs, and manners. Mr. Hastings had the whole weight of British India to sustain during the recent war, and while the attention of ministers was directed to the single object of subjugating the refractory states of America, the governor-general of Bengal was compelled to find resources there, for the security of the important charge with which he was intrusted. He was in reality abandoned to his fate by the government at home, but by virtue of his local knowledge, personal interest, and indefatigable exertions, he was enabled not only to preserve our Indian territories, but actually to strengthen them by further acquisitions; in consequence of which, all the attempts of the French to dispossess us on the eastern, as they did on the western, continent were completely frustrated. Mr. Burke and his friends, however, chose to overlook all this splendid service, and having some cause to be displeased with the conduct of Mr. Hastings towards themselves, they were determined to immolate him at the shrine of party, by an impeachment for peculation, tyranny, and other high crimes and misdemeanors. Even a condensed narrative of the proceedings that took place in the house of commons on this subject, would far exceed the limits of the present memoir; and of the trial itself, which began on the 12th of February, 1788, and terminated on the 23d of April, 1795, nothing like an abstract could possibly be given without running into details of an inordinate length.

During every stage of the business, Mr. Burke, who of course was the leading manager, evinced an Herculean strength of mind, and an industry that must have had a serious effect upon his bodily health and constitution.

Yet it is painful to reflect upon the harsh manner in which he behaved towards the eminent person, against whom all these exertions were directed, and whose ruin was evidently sought. On one occasion during the trial, perceiving that Mr. Hastings had neglected the usual obeisance to the court at his entry, Mr. Burke commanded him to kneel, in a tone of voice, and with a sternness of aspect, that made the whole assembly turn from him with disgust. Even some of his own party felt ashamed for him, and Fox whispered privately to one of his friends, in that critical moment, that he would rather have been Hastings than Burke. As the trial proceeded, the oratorical attractions, which threw at the beginning a splendour around it, began to lose their effect: and many who had voted for the prosecution, now regretted their having done so, when they saw how little the evidence agreed with the charges. A year had scarcely expired, when the conduct of Mr. Burke came under the consideration of the house of commons, and he was censured in a resolution, for going beyond the powers delegated to him, by charging Mr. Hastings with the murder of Nundcomar, though nothing of that kind was to be found among the articles of accusation.

Even when the trial drew towards a close, and every one anticipated what would be the result, the asperity of Mr. Burke, instead of yielding, increased to a degree that confirmed many in the opinion which they had long formed, that the prosecution originated in private and not in public motives.

After the council for Mr. Hastings had gone through with the defence of their client, during which they were often interrupted by questions and objections, Mr. Burke entered upon his reply, in the course of which, he alternately soared to the height of sublimity, and again sunk into the very depth of vulgar abuse. Of the latter he gave a proof in saying "That the insignificance of the prisoner ought not to induce their lordships to suppose him incapable of mischief; for though his origin was low, mean, and vulgar; though he was trained in the most base and sordid habits, yet when invested with a power to which his mind was not equal, he was capable of more complete, more extensive devastation, than any of the greatest con-

querors and tyrants who have oppressed mankind." It is surprising that a man so well informed as BURKE, should have thought such scurrility necessary to his cause; but it is more surprising that he should venture to speak thus of Mr. Hastings, who was at least as well born and educated as himself, being a branch of an ancient stock, and brought up at Westminster school. Even had his origin been as low as his accuser represented it, the circumstance of his birth ought not to have been mentioned to his disparagement, and that too in the presence of many persons, among both the peers and the managers, who had no more right to boast of their lineage than Mr. Hastings. In the same bad taste Mr. BURKE compared the accused to the keeper of a pigstye, and in another part of his speech to the Devil. "Mr. Hastings," he said, "was worse than Satan, for the evil spirit showed the kingdoms of the world to the Great Author of our sacred religion, in order that he might enjoy them; but he, (turning to the prisoner at the bar) gave the provinces of Hindostan into the possession of men appointed by himself, for the purpose of destroying them."

Many other things in the same strain disgraced the speech and the orator, but in the conclusion BURKE rose to an elegance of language and dignity of spirit, worthy of his genius.

"My lords," said he, "the commons wait the issue of this cause with trembling solicitude. Twenty-two years have they been employed in it, seven of which have passed in this trial. They behold the dearest interests of their country deeply involved in it; they feel that the very existence of this constitution depends upon it. Your lordships' justice stands pre-eminent in the world, but it stands amidst a vast heap of ruins, which surround it in every corner of Europe. If you slacken justice, and thereby weaken the bonds of society, the well-tempered authority of this court, which I trust in God will continue to the end of time, must receive a fatal wound, that no balm can cure, that no time can restore.

"My lords, it is not the criminality of the prisoner, it is not the claims of the commons, to demand judgment to be passed upon him, it is not the honour and dignity of this court, and the welfare of millions of the human race, that alone call upon you. When the devouring flames shall have destroyed this perishable globe, and it sinks into the abyss of Nature, from whence it was commanded into existence by the Great Author of it; then, my lords, when all nature, kings and judges themselves, must answer for their actions, there will be found what supersedes creation itself, namely, ETERNAL JUSTICE! It was the attribute of the great GOD OF NATURE before worlds were; it will reside with him when they perish; and the earthly portion of it committed to your care, is now solemnly deposited in your hands by the commons of England. I have done."

We must now turn to another prominent period in the political life of Mr. BURKE, but it is one which all his admirers and biographers hitherto have been desirous of throwing into shade, as though only the talents and virtues of a great man were to be noticed, and his failings were to be buried in oblivion. This would be to pervert the end of history, which is moral improvement, and no dependence could be placed on the delineation of any character, if the bright side of it alone were to be exhibited to public view. Such a course may be adopted properly enough, in regard to private persons, but the actions of statesmen are the materials of history; and, therefore, must be faithfully represented, to guard posterity from delusion.

At the latter end of the year 1788, the suspension of the royal functions rendered a meeting of parliament indispensable, to provide for the exigency of the case. Mr. FOX, the leader of the opposition, and the confidential friend of the prince of Wales, happened to be then in Italy, but a messenger being despatched to apprize him of the necessity of his presence, he hastened home without delay, and immediately began an active opposition to the minister. Mr. BURKE was equally zealous and enterprising on this occasion, but the conduct of the two leaders of the hostile ranks was so impetuous, that Mr. Pitt had soon an opportunity of throwing them into confusion, and of establishing an imperishable credit for himself, upon the very ground which they took to accomplish his overthrow. Mr. FOX claimed for the heir-apparent the indefeisible right of assuming the exercise of the regal authority, whenever there should be a suspension of moral power in the sove-

reign to discharge the functions of his office. This was strange doctrine to come from a Whig, and, if admitted, would subvert at once the principles laid down at the Revolution, and those which settled the house of Brunswick on the throne. Yet preposterous as it was, Mr. Burke defended it with his wonted energy, and assailed the minister in virulent language, for presuming to say, in opposition to it, that the prince of Wales had no more right to take upon himself the regency, without a previous call from parliament, than the humblest individual in the country. Had Mr. Burke been satisfied with attacking the officers of the crown, some allowance might have been made for his intemperance; but when he ventured to speak of the afflicted monarch in the coarsest terms of disrespect, the members on both sides of the house of commons, who were accustomed to hear him with delight, felt a thrill of horror, and involuntarily uttered an expression of abhorrence. This, however, had not the salutary effect of restraining the passions of the orator within the bounds of moderation. On the contrary, he went on from day to day, as long as the question of the regency lasted, in the same imprudent manner, never mentioning the calamitous situation of the king, but with an air that carried the appearance of triumph, rather than of commiseration. At one time he spoke of the malady as a judgment, and said that "The Almighty had hurled the king from his throne;" with an allusion not very delicately expressed to the case of Nebuchadnezzar. This conduct gave universal offence, and while it lowered the orator in the public opinion, did injury to the party with whom he acted, and to the cause which he so imprudently advocated. At length Mr. Fox took the alarm, and would have retraced his steps, by qualifying the language that had been used, and reducing the high claims which had been set up by himself and his friends. But it was too late, for the minister finding his strength, and probably irritated at the coarse manner in which he had been treated, was determined to bring the question of right to an issue. The opposition then endeavoured to make it out that the case of the king was irremediable, and to support this conclusion, they adduced the authority of Dr. Warren, who was the only one of the court physicians, that ventured to pronounce the malady hopeless. This judgment was opposed by Dr. Willis, whose whole practice having been directed to mental diseases, gave superior weight to his opinion. Mr. Burke, however strenuously contended that Willis was no better than an empiric, and that Dr. Warren was an oracle, upon whose decision the fullest reliance ought to be placed. One important benefit that resulted from these contentions, was, the delay which they necessarily occasioned.

In the mean time the state of the royal patient began to amend, and while his condition was represented as hopeless, by the eager politicians, who were anticipating the attainment of power, under the benignant rays of the rising sun, the sudden intelligence burst upon them, that no regency would take place, for that the king was sufficiently recovered to discharge his public duties. Thus terminated the expectations, but not the labours, of Mr. Burke; for a new and wonderful scene was now opening upon the great theatre of the world, to call his genius into a wider sphere of action, and a nobler display of his powers, than any in which he had hitherto been engaged. At the time when the British nation, and its dependencies, exhibited the most glowing spirit of loyalty towards their sovereign, a spectacle of quite an opposite description was going on in France. The seeds of a Revolution had long been sown there, and now the sanguinary harvest began in the degradation of the mildest monarch that ever sat on a throne; whose only fault lay in yielding too flexibly to the ever varying and turbulent passions of a capricious people. Mr. Burke, from his acquaintance with the French character in general, and his observations on the mischievous tendency of metaphysical principles, when applied to the science of government, could not avoid seeing the consequences of this fermentation on its first appearance. While, therefore, numbers in England and elsewhere were looking with surprise to the mutations which the professors of the new philosophy were, with surprising dexterity, bringing about from day to day, at Paris, the penetrating mind of our illustrious statesman was engaged in examining the secret springs and practical influence of these marvellous changes. Instead of being dazzled by these false lights, and misled

by them, as too many were, into a desire of following them, he stood with firmness on the solid ground of experimental truth, and pointed out the deceitfulness of that Serbonian bog, which was the object of general wonder. At a very early period of the Revolution he expressed his sentiments upon it, to several of his friends, abroad and at home. One of his correspondents in France having solicited his opinion more in detail, Mr. Burke drew up a long letter in compliance with his desire; but finding that the subject continued to be pregnant with fresh matter every week, and that as he proceeded in watching the agitated elements, the more alarming the prospect became, he extended his observations, till that which was meant for an epistle became a volume. He now thought, and justly, that the influenza of revolutionary principles called for a powerful antidote, on which account, and neither with a view to profit nor popularity, he sent his "Reflections on the French Revolution," to the press. The effect produced was so electrical, that in a few months several thousand copies were sold; and though, as was to be expected, a host of antagonists rose up in arms against the author, all agreed in paying a tribute to his genius. Among the rest, Dr. Samuel Parr having had occasion in one of his fugitive tracts to notice this performance, expressed himself in this remarkable manner: "Upon the first perusal of Mr. Burke's book, I felt, like many other men, its magic force, and, like many other men, I was at last delivered from the illusions which had 'cheated my reason,' and borne me onward from admiration to assent. But, though the dazzling spell be now dissolved, I still remember with pleasure the gay and celestial visions, when my 'mind in sweet madness was robbed of itself.' I still look back, with a mixture of pity and holy awe, to the wizard himself, who having lately broken his wand in a start of phrenzy, has shortened the term of his sorceries; and of drugs so potent to 'bathe the spirits in delight,' I must still acknowledge, that many were culled from the choicest and most virtuous plants of Paradise itself."

The phrenzy to which the philosophical divine here alluded, was the conduct of Mr. Burke in the house of commons, where he seized every opportunity of warning his countrymen against the dangerous influence of French principles. He first drew the attention of the senate to this great subject at the commencement of the session in 1790, when the army estimates came under consideration. On that occasion Mr. Fox, in opposing the military establishment as being too high, adverted to the state of France, and in terms of exultation eulogized the Revolution that had taken place. Mr. Burke rose upon this, and though he considered the proposed establishment as unnecessarily high, because England had nothing to apprehend from the powers of Europe, one of the most formidable of them having been blotted out of the map, yet he could not avoid noticing and differing with the principles professed by his friend. So far from agreeing that the examples of France were objects for imitation, he reprobated them as extremely pernicious, and even more dangerous than all her hostility. In the reign of the fourteenth Louis, they set an example of splendid despotism; in that of the sixteenth Louis, they had set one infinitely more dangerous; they had shown the way to innovation and destructive speculation; they had set an example by the establishment of a bloody, ferocious, and tyrannical democracy; they had destroyed in the space of two months, more than ages would restore; they had madly pulled down their monarchy—destroyed their church—annihilated their laws—ruined the discipline of their army—put an end to their commerce; and by the exertions of a desperate faction, established, in the place of order, anarchy and confusion. They had an army without a head, accountable to no one, making their own will the law, to which the national assembly were forced to submit;—and yet, this Revolution, this army, was to be compared to the British Revolution. "It was, however," said Mr. Burke, "a false comparison; for the Revolution in England was against a king, who was taking the first steps to make himself absolute; the Revolution in France was against a king who was taking the first steps to make his people free. The Revolution in England was not carried on for the subversion of the Constitution, but for its preservation; all order, and all the ties of civil government were not destroyed, but strengthened;

and England held up her head prouder on that event, than she had ever done before. England by her Revolution maintained her natural aristocracy, as well as the aristocracy of the people; France in her Revolution had destroyed aristocracy, and involved herself in depth of ruin." Mr. Burke further observed, "That he could not well tell what they had done; but they had by their Revolution destroyed every bond of social order and regular government. They had separated the people from their king—tenants from their landlords—servants from their masters—and in a word, done a deed without a name."

Mr. Fox, in reply, endeavoured to soften down the warmth of his friend by a moderate explanation; but Sheridan appeared to take a delight in widening the breach, for he immediately condemned the speech of Burke, as disgraceful to an Englishman, as supporting despotism, and as libelling those who were virtuously engaged in obtaining the rights of men.

It was impossible to sit silent under such an attack, and it was not in the nature of Burke to bear a blow of this kind without a retort. He rose, and said, "That for some time he had apprehended that the affairs of France would be productive of a division among many in that house, who had frequently acted together; he had not, however, expected that upon a separation being about to take place between himself and that honourable gentleman whom he used to call his friend, that he would have treated him so harshly, so unjustly, and so unbecomingly, as he had done, in imputing to him a conduct, of which he had never been guilty. He was no supporter of despotism, but a firm defender of a well-mixed monarchy. He was no libeller of freemen, or any other class of men, but he reprobated, as he always would do, the conduct of ferocious, bloody, and desperate democracies." Mr. Burke then proceeded to observe, "That there were persons in this country, who would be happy to promote innovation, and he cautioned the house against them. He entreated them to be on their guard, and to maintain as sacred the ground of the Constitution." Mr. Burke concluded by declaring, that from henceforward he would never have any intercourse with Sheridan, but leave him to enjoy his little popularity, and the mean applause of his clubs.

The schism now became more extended, and the opposition were divided into two parties, one headed by Fox, and the other by Burke. In less than a month after the angry discussion here mentioned, the former brought forward a motion for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, which Burke opposed, and in his speech again drew a fearful picture of the state of France, which country he still thought was the most miserable upon earth. In justification of the vote, which he meant to give on the present occasion, he said that some parties here had, like the French, got possession of the words National Rights, and on this they relied as their strongest hold. "But," said Mr. Burke, "I have from my earliest years turned with aversion from all these chimerical and abstract rights, which have for some time past confounded human reason, and disturbed the imagination of statesmen. At the age of twenty, I thought that all abstract rights, natural rights, and such nonsense, were unfit for men to hear; and now, that my hair is silvered by age, I am more and more confirmed in my abhorrence and disgust of them. Natural rights are dangerous topics of discussion, for they supersede all social duties. They are paramount to the compact which introduced into the community new rights and other ideas. They bring us back to that stage of savage helplessness, when, whatever may be our rights, we enjoy them but precariously, depending on casual circumstances for the miserable indulgence of beastly appetite and ferocious passion. Society annihilates all those natural rights, and draws to its mass all the component parts of which these rights are made up. It takes in all the virtue of the good, and all the wisdom of the wise; it gives life, support, and action, to every faculty of the soul, and secures the possession of every comfort which these proud and boasting natural rights impotently hold out, but cannot ascertain. Society finds protection for all—it gives defence to the weak—employment to the industrious—consolation to the distressed; it nurses the infant, and it soothes the dying. In all the stages of the life of man, where either the instilment of principles or the consolations of hope are

wanting, society is ready; and to confer this succour, an established religion is a powerful and necessary instrument." Upon these solid principles, Mr. Burke resisted the claims of the Dissenters in the present case, and defended the bulwarks which had been framed for the security of the national church. Though it was evident that the bond of union no longer subsisted between the two leaders of the opposition, the forms of courtesy were still kept up till the next session, when the bill for the government of Canada having brought the subject of the Revolution again into discussion, Mr. Burke, in an elaborate speech, entered on the general principles of legislation, repeated what he had before observed on natural rights, and expressed his conviction, that there was a league formed in this country, the design of which was to subvert the Constitution.

Mr. Fox, after declaring his opinion, that the French Revolution was one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind, proceeded to denounce the doctrines of Mr. Burke as inimical to liberty, and contrary to the sentiments formerly maintained by his right honourable friend. This charge of inconsistency, or rather of apostacy, provoked a reply, in the course of which, Mr. Burke said, "Mr. Fox has treated me with harshness and malignity; after harassing me with his light troops in the skirmishes of order, he has brought the heavy artillery of his own great abilities to destroy me."

Mr. Burke then went over the ground again, and maintained that the new French system was replete with anarchy, impiety, vice, and misery; that the principles which he now advanced were in perfect unison with the creed which he had always professed, and to which he would inflexibly adhere as long as he lived. "Hitherto," said he, "Mr. Fox and myself have often differed upon slight matters, without a loss of friendship on either side; but there is something in this cursed French Revolution that envenoms every thing." Mr. Fox upon this whispered, "There is no loss of friendship between us." But Mr. Burke, instead of being softened by this conciliatory remark, exclaimed, "There is! I know the price of my conduct: our friendship is at an end!" This unexpected declaration had such an effect upon the nerves of Mr. Fox, that he let drop some tears, while he endeavoured to appease the irritated mind of his old associate. But neither the concessions which he made, nor the interposing kindness of others, could bring about a reconciliation; and from that moment these two great men became almost as much strangers, as if there had never been the least intimacy between them.

Without going so far as to say, that the conduct of Mr. Burke on this memoble occasion was free from blame, much must be allowed to the warmth of his feelings, and to much praise he is entitled, on the ground of general patriotism. He certainly had reason to complain, if not of Mr. Fox, yet of those with whom that gentleman maintained the most familiar intercourse. These subalterns were in the constant habit, through various channels, of impeaching Mr. Burke before the bar of the public, and accusing him of a dereliction of principles; while Mr. Fox was panegyrised for his firmness, in adhering to the sound Whig doctrine of "The Rights of the People."

Upon this, Mr. Burke drew up and published his "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," in which, after taking such a review of his political life as was necessary to his justification from the charge of apostacy, he entered into an historical discussion of the fundamental principles on which the English Revolution was established.

In the mean time his active mind was intent upon the proceedings going on in France, and every day brought a melancholy proof of the correctness of the opinion which at the beginning he had formed and expressed, of the awful change that had taken place. He was much affected by the condition of the French clergy, who were among the first sufferers by the Revolution. For those exiles of this venerable order, who sought and found an asylum in this country, Mr. Burke exerted himself with benevolent alacrity; and while his calumniators were courting an alliance with the persecutors, he employed all the means that were in his power to relieve the afflicted.

This liberality procured him the thanks of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of France, conveyed to him by the archbishop of Aix; in return for which Mr. Burke wrote to that prelate the following letter:

London, July 15, 1791.

Sir,

It is with great satisfaction to me, that the generous victims of injustice and tyranny accept in good part the homage which I have offered to their virtues. It is a distinction which I would not have had occasion to merit from the clergy of France in the time of their credit and splendour. Your church, the intelligence of which was the ornament of the Christian world in its prosperity, is now more brilliant in the moment of its misfortunes, to the eyes who are capable of judging of it. Never did so great a number of men display a constancy so inflexible, a disinterestedness so manifest, a humility so magnanimous, so much dignity in their patience, and so much elevation in their sentiment of honour. Ages have not furnished so many noble examples as France has produced in the space of two years. It is odious to search in antiquity for the merit we admire, and to be insensible to that which passes under our eyes. France is in a deplorable situation, both in its political and moral state; but it seems to be in the order of the general economy of the world, that when the greatest and most detestable vices domineer, the most eminent and distinguished virtues raise their heads more proudly. Such is not the time for mediocrity. We may have some diversity in our opinions, but we have no difference in principles. There is but one kind of honour and virtue in the world; it consists in sacrificing every other consideration to the sentiments of our duty, of right, and of piety. It is this which the clergy of France have done. I will not examine scrupulously by what motives men like you have thought it your duty to support all that you have done. All that I see, I am forced to admire. The rest is out of my reach—out, perhaps, of the reach of those, who are better instructed than me. One thing I see distinctly, because the bishops of France have proved it by their example; and that is, that they have made known to all the orders and all the classes of citizens, the advantages which even religion can derive from the alliance of its own proper dignity with the character which illustrious birth and the sentiment of honour gives to man.

It is with good reason, that in France the noblesse should be proud of the clergy, and the clergy of the noblesse, although these two classes be for the present condemned to passive courage, which gives so much glory to the one and the other.

I shall present to the bishop of St. Paul de Leon your fine and affecting address; perhaps, he has already received it. I am sure that he will remain fixed; if I may judge from the little I have seen of him, he is a most estimable and a most amiable man. He has been received here by our high clergy, and by many others, not certainly in the manner due to his rank and merit, but with a respect for the one and the other, with which, from his natural goodness, he seems to be satisfied.

I do not know if it is to the complaisance of your lordship, that I owe the chefs-d'œuvres of ingenuity, intelligence, and superior eloquence, varied as the occasions require, in the different discourses and letters which I, from time to time, receive. They are the works of a great statesman, of a great prelate, and of a man versed in the science of administration. We cannot be astonished that the state, the clergy, the finances, and the trade of the kingdom should be ruined, when the author of these works, instead of having an important share in the councils of his country, is persecuted and undone. The proscription of such men is enough to cover a whole people with eternal reproach. Those who persecute them have, by this one act, done more injury to their country in depriving it of their services, than a million of men of their own standard can ever repair, even when they shall be disposed to build upon the ruins they have made.

Maintain, sir, the courage which you have hitherto shown; and be persuaded, that though the world is not worthy of you and your colleagues, we are not insensible of the honour which you do to our common nature.

I have the honour to be,
Very truly, &c.
Edmund Burke.

This letter was answered by the archbishop in another, equally eloquent and expressive of liberal sentiments.

August 7, 1791.

Sir,

You have been pleased to address to me an opinion that does me honour

and I cannot conceal the impression, that the suffrage of the man, the most celebrated for talents, virtues, and success, has made on my heart. Give me leave, above all, to acknowledge with an interest infinitely superior to all personal consideration, the eulogy which you have made on the respectable order of which I have the honour to partake the misfortunes. The first orator of England has become the defender of the clergy of France. Yours is the voice that has so long directed, and balanced the opinion of a nation, of which France ought rather to be the rival by its progress in intelligence, than by its political interest. Oh! that the dark clouds which overhang my country may not for ever obscure the rays of light which the sciences, letters, and the arts bestow! We are in a time of trouble; we attend only to the noise of our discussions; we read only the productions of party; and how many wise men and enlightened citizens remain in silence! We can no longer judge for ourselves, and a foreign observer only can decide for us, what ought to be the judgment of posterity.

When my colleagues, in addressing themselves to you, chose me for their organ, I was penetrated with their sentiments, and with those of the ministers of all ranks, whom nothing can separate from their consciences. I spoke for them with the feeling which they gave me; and the noble thoughts, the touching expressions, I can boldly say, were only the daily impressions which the knowledge of their virtues inspires. It is wanting to their glory that you should see them, as I have seen them, simple in their conduct, tranquil in their adversity, and content with having fulfilled their duty. The church of France is the stranded bark which the waters have left after the tempest, and every one of us in the shipwreck contemplates with astonishment those new heavens, and this new earth, which were unknown before. By what destiny must it be, that after having supported, all my life, those maxims of Christian charity, of which the first ages of the church gave us both lessons and examples, I see myself the victim of intolerance and persecution! It is in the eighteenth century—it is in a nation that boasts of its philosophy—it is even in the moment that they announce the Revolution of Liberty, that they persecute those who practise what they believe in religion, and who wish to preserve the worship of their fathers! We read in the Constitution, that "No one ought to be disturbed for his religious opinions;" we read in the laws concerning religion, oaths, deprivations, infamous penalties, and exile; and it is on the overthrow of their new Constitution that they found the civil Constitution of the clergy. What has become of all those natural laws, which were to serve for the basis of all their laws? We are the men whom, they wish to accuse with prejudices, who plead this day the rights of liberty. The cause, sir, that we have defended, is the noble, just, and holy cause of liberty, humanity, and religion. The clergy of France have demonstrated what it was—persuasion without fanaticism—courage without excess—and resistance without trouble, and without insurrection. We have suffered all kinds of loss; we have endured all sorts of rigour; and we remain tranquil and firm, because nothing is so unconquerable as the probity which supports itself on religion. Behold that of which they cannot judge in the world! They conceive that honour is the only sentiment which influences men of all conditions to the accomplishment of the most sacred duties. God forbid that I should weaken this noble instinct, which comes to the aid of reason, which rallies the warrior in the day of combat, and which can animate to the love of the public weal when it does not mislead us in the pursuit! But you have better defined this simple and true sentiment, "which consists in the habitual impression of our duty, of right and of piety." This sentiment ought to be in general that of good citizens, and there are no morals in a country where it is not acted upon. If they wish to destroy religion in France, it will be the first example of an empire without religion; and no one has proved, sir, with more eloquence than yourself, how much it imports to attach the principles of human society to something too high for man to outrage or destroy. They must consecrate by religion, respect for the laws; for what must the laws be, which an entire people obey only through constraint, and not by inclination? They will soon perceive that the force to which they yield is only the force which they give; this force will weaken of itself by

general corruption, and the state is no more!

You have reason, sir, to encourage us in the laborious career to which we are doomed. It is the writings of such men as you, which maintain in all nations a wholesome morality. We cannot help believing that our fellow-citizens will sooner or later do us the justice which we receive from foreigners; and that we shall revive, in more peaceable times, the principles of religion and humanity.

I do not speak to you, sir, of those other writings, in which I am desirous of showing how useful would be the lights of a long and peaceable administration. It does not belong to me to judge of the use which may be made of them, and it must not astonish us, that men are ungrateful for truths which come from us, who have no passion for revolutions.

Accept, sir, the testimonies of the veneration and attachment, which well-intentioned men ought to feel for the enlightened and virtuous of all countries. I cannot tell you how sensible we have been to the attention, which the clergy of England have shown towards one of our most virtuous and respectable colleagues. You are equally just to his character in society, as to his principles and courage; and such are the regrets of his diocese, that they consider his absence as a public calamity.

I have the honour to be,
&c. &c. &c.

On the 23d of February 1792, died Sir Joshua Reynolds, the old and constant friend of Edmund Burke, who, on the impulse of the moment, drew up a beautiful sketch of his character, for the public papers. This eulogium, which has been compared to that of Apelles, by Pericles, we here insert, as alike honourable to the merits of the deceased, and the feelings of the survivor:—

Last night, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, died, at his house in Leicester Fields, Sir Joshua Reynolds.

His illness was long, but borne with a mild and cheerful fortitude, without the least mixture of any thing irritable or querulous, agreeably to the placid and even tenor of his whole life. He had from the beginning of his malady a distinct view of his dissolution, which he contemplated with that entire composure, that nothing but the innocence, integrity, and usefulness of his life, and an unaffected submission to the will of Providence, could bestow. In this situation he had every consolation from family tenderness, which his own kindness to his family had indeed well deserved.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was, on very many accounts, one of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishmen who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was equal to the greatest masters of the renowned ages. In portrait he went beyond them; for he communicated to that description of the art, in which English artists are the most engaged, a variety, a fancy, and a dignity derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed them in a superior manner, did not always preserve when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention of history, and the amenity of landscape. In painting portraits, he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend upon it from a higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and his lessons seem to be derived from his paintings.

He possessed the theory as perfectly as the practice of his art. To be such a painter, he was a profound and penetrating philosopher.

In full happiness of foreign and domestic fame, admired by the expert in art, and by the learned in science, courted by the great, caressed by sovereign powers, and celebrated by distinguished poets, his native humility, modesty, and candour never forsook him, even on surprise or provocation; nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinizing eye, in any part of his conduct or discourse.

His talents of every kind—powerful from nature, and not meanly cultivated by letters—his social virtues in all the relations and all the habitudes of life, rendered him the centre of a very great and unparalleled variety of agreeable societies, which will be dissipated by his death. He had too much merit not to excite some jealousy, too much innocence to provoke any enmity. The loss of no

man of his time can be felt with more sincere, general, and unmixed sorrow.

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

Sir Joshua Reynolds gave a striking testimony of the steadiness of his attachment to Mr. BURKE, by appointing him one of his executors, and bequeathing to him £2,000, in addition to a like sum which he had lent to him some time before, and the bond for which he directed to be cancelled.

It has been said, and at one time the report was pretty generally credited, that the published discourses of Sir Joshua, upon the principles of the art which he adorned, were in a great measure indebted for their elegance to the pen of BURKE; but this assertion has been so completely disproved by those who possessed the best means of information, as to be no longer worthy of credit.

This was a busy year to Mr. BURKE, who, besides his private avocations, and the multiplicity of his correspondence, felt himself bound to stand forward against the innovations proposed by his old associates. Early in the session, Mr., now Earl Grey, introduced his motion for a Parliamentary Reform, which ill-timed measure was opposed by Mr. BURKE in a very powerful speech. He began by comparing his situation to that of a worn-out invalid in the battles of the state, and who was now left to guard the citadel of the constitution. After this exordium he waived the general subject as offering nothing new, but he showed the danger of the discussion, by exhibiting proofs that there was an avowed party in the country whose object was to overthrow and change the constitution. Upon being urged by the most clamorous calls, to produce his evidence, he entered into particular details, and named several societies recently formed on revolutionary principles. "When such persons," said he, "the advocates for Paine's doctrines, the solicitors of a confederacy with the most infamous foreign clubs, were also the advocates for a Parliamentary Reform, it was high time to sound the alarm of danger to the constitution. In France, the advocates of Reform, at the very moment their king was carrying into effect a real and substantial change for the national good, snatched the crown from his head, and overturned his throne; the consequence of which was, that instead of one governor they had seven hundred tyrants."

With such an instance before their eyes, Mr. BURKE said, his advice was, "Be wise by experience; hold fast the blessings you enjoy, and trust to no theoretical remedies."

Soon after this, Mr. Fox came forward with a motion in favour of the Unitarian Dissenters; which Mr. BURKE also opposed, not upon intolerant grounds, but from a persuasion that the claimants were dangerous subjects, who aimed at the downfall of every system which was dear to the country, and whose religion was connected with political principles hostile to the welfare of the establishment both civil and religious. This charge roused the members around him, (for he still sat on the opposition bench,) to an excessive degree of animosity. In answer to those who demanded proofs of what he alleged, Mr. BURKE narrated the proceedings of some late meetings of the Unitarian Dissenters, which demonstrated unequivocally their connexion with the French cannibals. This expression being caught up by the supporters of the motion, produced a repetition on the part of Mr. BURKE, who said, Gentlemen might cry out, "Hear! hear!" as long as they thought proper; he had, however, asserted no more than what he could prove; for he could show, by documents, that the French cannibals, after having torn out the hearts of those they had murdered, squeezed the blood into their wine and drank it.

As the name of Dr. Priestley was brought up in the course of this debate, Mr. BURKE took occasion to bestow some severe censures upon the principles of that restless polemic. This will account for the angry tone in which the doctor ever after spoke of his old acquaintance; but when he circulated the story that Mr. BURKE, on hearing of the riots at Birmingham, ran about in an ecstacy of joy, congratulating every body he met, he was guilty himself of the very offence against charity, which he attempted to fasten upon another, for he had no authority whatever to adduce in proof of what he related.

Such was the serious aspect of the times, that parliament assembled again at the end of the same year, to adopt measures for the security of the country, the peace

of which was threatened by societies affiliated on the pretext of Reform, but palpably intended to bring about a Revolution, similar to that of France. In the debates that arose upon the address, Fox and Sheridan ridiculed the alarm that had been excited, and condemned the speech from the throne, as a libel upon the people. Burke, in reply, maintained that with the same justice Cicero might have been charged with libelling all Rome, when he announced the conspiracy of Cataline and his companions, and their intention to burn the city, and massacre the senate.

Against the proposition of Mr. Fox for a negociation with the French republicans, he entered his solemn protest in this energetic language: "Stained with crimes, blasting and damning all the courts of Europe, ought France to be acknowledged? Ought she to be acknowledged without waiting (in the words of Hamlet) for the whetting of the axe?" Ought she to be acknowledged in the teeth of all her decrees of universal hatred to monarchies, and in the teeth of the commission of regicide? Oh! if she were, the nation might depend upon it, that the murder of the king of France would only be preliminary to the murder of the king of England!"

Mr. Burke then proceeded to declare, that as soon as Great Britain acknowledged the existing state of things in France, by a formal negociation, from that moment, *rebus extantibus*, she must bow the neck to that country. This was a consequence which he insisted would be the result of such policy. "In her system of conduct," observed the orator, "France has followed that of Mahomet, who, affecting to preach peace, carried his Koran in one hand, and the sword in the other, to punish all who would not acknowledge his mission. Thus has acted the French republic. It has published a declaration of the rights of man, and propagated them by the sword."

Mr. Fox, however, was not to be driven from his purpose by these arguments, though they were confirmed by the glaring evidence of facts on every side. He persevered in maintaining that there was no danger to be apprehended from the revolutionary doctrines which were then rapidly spreading over the country, and he still continued to palliate the conduct of the French republicans, though at the same time he professed to abhor regicide, and to admire a monarchical form of government. In the mean time the ranks of opposition became thinner every day, and many of the friends of Mr. Fox followed the example of Burke, when he crossed the floor of the house, and declared that he quitted the camp for ever.

On taking a retrospect of these tempestuous scenes, and considering the marvellous events, that for a series of years resulted from the revolutionary abyss then opened in France, one cannot help admiring the penetrating genius of the man who first detected the deceitful mass that lay beneath, and foretold the desolation which the eruption would produce. Mr. Burke might truly be called the Cassandra of his day, for every speech that he uttered, and every line that he wrote on the subject of France, received in the issue, the stamp of an oracle. It is true, that his zeal on this subject, sometimes carried him to great lengths, but if in a few instances, as when he exhibited a dagger to illustrate the character and faith of republican amity, he appeared too theatrical; the integrity of the motive must be admitted, and much allowance therefore is due to the enthusiasm by which he was animated. At this critical period, the thoughts of Mr. Burke were directed wholly to the general welfare, while Mr. Fox courted the applause of the multitude. The coolness that had subsisted between these two great men for three years, was not however of such a nature as to preclude all hopes of reconciliation, till this session of parliament. Efforts indeed had actually been made, to bring about a union of parties for the public benefit, but they were all rendered nugatory by the obstinacy of Mr. Fox, who even refused to consult the most respectable members of the opposition, on the measures proper to be adopted in the senate.

It seemed therefore evident, that he was setting up for himself, and as he espoused the cause of the French abroad, and that of the republican faction at home, there was reason enough to apprehend the most serious consequences from his ascendency. Burke knew that revolutionary principles must produce revolutionary practices; and it was this conviction which made him so active in exposing the danger of that friendship with regicides, which his opponents assiduously sought and earnestly recommended. At the end of this stormy session, Mr. Burke drew

up, and communicated to the Duke of Portland, a narrative of the proceedings of Mr. Fox and his cabal, in which many extraordinary facts were developed, full enough to justify the separation that had taken place, and the necessity of giving support to the government for the preservation of the constitution.

In 1794, Mr. Burke had two severe trials, in the death of his brother, followed by that of his only son Richard, who was his colleague in the representation of Malton. The next year he retired from parliament; and soon after received the grant of a pension for himself and his wife, payable out of the civil list. But this mark of the royal favour, though bestowed when he was no longer in a situation to assist ministers by his vote, brought upon him a load of illiberal abuse; and two peers did themselves no honour by the manner of their noticing Mr. Burke and his pension in the House of Lords.

These illiberal attacks, (for such they unquestionably were,) produced a spirited retort in a letter addressed to Lord Fitzwilliam. In this tract the venerable author gave abundant proof, that neither age nor misfortune had weakened his mental energies; and if those who so wantonly provoked him did not writhe under the scourge, their nerves must have been of a peculiar construction.

The next and last performance which Mr. Burke gave to the public, was a series of "Letters on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France;" and of all his works this may fairly challenge the pre-eminence for a comprehensive view of foreign and domestic policy, strength of reasoning, and powerful appeals to the understanding.

The design of it was as exalted as the execution was masterly; being no less than to rouse the nation from a state of despondency under difficulties, to confidence in its resources, and a vigorous exertion of its powers, in a struggle, the glorious termination of which our political Nestor foresaw and foretold.

At length these incessant labours operated upon the constitution of Mr. Burke in a manner that soon gave indications of a rapid decay. Still, amidst all his bodily weakness, his mind preserved its vigour, and on the seventh of July, 1797, he conversed with animation on the great subject which had so long occupied his thoughts. The next day, while one of his friends, assisted by a servant, was carrying him into another room, he faintly said, "God bless you," fell back, and expired without a groan. His remains were interred, on the 15th, in the church of Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire, in which parish he had long resided, on an estate which is said to have been given him by the marquis of Rockingham. But it is extraordinary, and little to the credit of the age, that as yet no monument has been raised to his memory. Mr. Burke in his person was about five feet ten inches in height, erect, and well formed; his countenance was pleasing, but being very near-sighted, his action in public speaking lost much of its effect. Of his talents there cannot be two opinions; his knowledge was so various that he could converse upon all subjects, and that with such a grasp of mind and felicity of expression, as delighted the hearer, who, on parting from him naturally exclaimed, "What a wonderful man!"

As an orator he stood confessedly in the very first class, but he had the fault of prolixity, and too generally overloaded his argument with an exuberance of illustrative imagery. His metaphors were sometimes incongruous, and his language was occasionally so low as to excite surprise and disgust. In his manners he was urbane and generous, very communicative of his advice, and ready to patronize merit. Of this he gave a proof in his liberality to Barry the painter, whom he took under his protection in Dublin, and sent him at his own expense to Italy. While there, the most friendly correspondence passed between them, and through life Mr. Burke behaved kindly to his ingenious countryman, although the behaviour of Barry was far from being such as he could approve.

The literary character of Mr. Burke is above all praise. Though he wrote rapidly, not a line dropped from his pen but what bore the striking impress of his powerful mind, and in truth he can hardly be said to have written a single page without communicating to the most enlightened reader something new, either in thought or illustration. Wisdom and eloquence, which others attain with labour, were in him the habitual and ordinary march of his ideas; whence his style constantly exhibits such a superabundance of argument and imagery, that while our attention is pursuing the track of his reasoning, we

are in danger of losing ourselves amidst the various beauties with which it is enforced and embellished. The same characteristics distinguished the oratory of Mr. BURKE, that are still perceived in his compositions; but though he rarely, if ever, failed to delight his hearers by his manner and his matter, he too frequently weakened the effect of his elocution by not stopping at the right period of his argument; the consequence of which was, that those who had been charmed and convinced by the former part of the speech, became, at the close of it, languid, tired, and indifferent.

In domestic life Mr. BURKE exhibited such a striking contrast to his associates, that it is a matter of some surprise how a person of his philosophical principles and temperate habits could endure a connexion with men, most of whose time was dissipated, to use no worse term, in midnight revelry over the bottle, or at the gaming-table. To reconcile private vice with public virtue is a task which no casuist has yet ventured to undertake in a free and impartial spirit; nor would any one engage in the proof that the union is consistent, were it not from a desire to justify particular characters, whose morals have been at variance with the professions which they set up in the face of the world. Dr. Price was well aware of this, and therefore, in one of his political sermons, he took occasion, sharply, to reprobate the pernicious maxim, that patriotism and profligacy could exist in the same person. He did this in reference to the leaders of the party to which he belonged, and he lamented most devoutly and sincerely, that while, by their oratorical powers, these great men were upholding and propagating the same doctrines with himself, as being essential to human happiness, they rendered them altogether nugatory by the most scandalous conduct in the ordinary transactions of life.

When the French Revolution broke out, it was seen that public and private virtue cannot be separated, without endangering the fundamental principles upon which all social order must stand, and by the consummation of which the rights of individuals can alone be secured.

In that storm, BURKE appeared impregnable, like the rock whose basis is infixed in the foundation of eternal morality, while the political sophists of the day, having nothing stable in their minds for the regulation of their conduct in perilous times, were driven about by every wind that blew, having no point of certain distinction, nor any principles upon which they could depend for their guidance and security, amidst the sea of revolutionary strife, from which, as they and others vainly flattered themselves, a new world of perfection was about to arise. Most of these visionaries have dropped into oblivion, and the few that remain are so little known, that their very names will in a short space be forgotten. BURKE, on the contrary, has left an imperishable memorial; every day increases its value, and future ages will have recourse to it for the maxims of political wisdom in the government and direction of life. Whatever may be thought of those infirmities which he possessed in common with the rest of mankind, or of the errors into which he occasionally fell, he had the singular merit of dissolving the links of party, at a critical period, when that party began to assume the dangerous part of a faction, under a leader whose ambition, admitting no restraint,

"Sprung upwards, like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, won his way."

Taking, therefore, a retrospective glance at that part of our national history, and looking steadfastly upon the opposite conduct of the men who distinguished themselves when the horrors of the Revolution had nearly broken in upon the shores of Britain, one cannot help admiring the intrepid spirit that first and last opposed the torrent, and for so doing brought upon himself the hatred of his compeers. Not in the least intimidated by their taunts and reproaches, he pursued his course, and by that firmness became a main instrument of rousing the nation to that resistance against anarchy, which ultimately gave peace to the world. Like the faithful seraph, so admirably painted by the poet, he stood

"Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrified;
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from Truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them, forth he [pass'd
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of insolence feared aught;
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On those proud towns to swift destruction hurl'd."

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

The late Mr. Burke, from a principle of unaffected humility, which they, who were the most intimately acquainted with his character, best know to have been in his estimation one of the most important moral duties, never himself made any collection of the various publications with which, during a period of forty years, he adorned and enriched the literature of this country. When, however, the rapid and unexampled demand for his "Reflections on the Revolution of France," had unequivocally testified his celebrity as a writer, some of his friends so far prevailed upon him, that he permitted them to put forth a regular edition of his works. Accordingly, three volumes in quarto appeared under that title in 1792, printed for the late Mr. Dodsley. That edition, therefore, has been made the foundation of the present, for which a form has been chosen better adapted to public convenience. Such errours of the press as have been discovered in it are here rectified; in other respects it is faithfully followed, except that in one instance, an accident of little moment has occasioned a slight deviation from the strict chronological arrangement; and that, on the other hand, a speech of conspicuous excellence, on his declining the poll at Bristol, in 1780, is here, for the first time, inserted in its proper place.

As the activity of the Author's mind, and the lively interest which he took in the welfare of his country, ceased only with his life, many subsequent productions issued from his pen, which were received in a manner corresponding with his distinguished reputation. He wrote also various tracts, of a less popular description, which he designed for private circulation, in quarters where he supposed they might produce most benefit to the community; but which, with some other papers, have been printed since his death, from copies which he left behind him fairly transcribed, and most of them corrected as for the press. All these, now first collected together, form the contents of the last volume. They are disposed in chronological order, with the exception of the Preface to Brissot's Address, which having appeared in the Author's lifetime, and from delicacy not being avowed by him, did not come within the plan of this edition, but has been placed at the end of the last volume, on its being found deficient in just bulk.

The several posthumous publications, as they from time to time made their appearance, were accompanied by appropriate prefaces. These, however, as they were principally intended for temporary purposes, have been omitted. Some few explanations only, which they contained, seem here to be necessary.

The "Observations on the Conduct of the Minority in the Session of 1793," had been written and sent by Mr. Burke as a paper entirely and strictly confidential; but it crept surreptitiously into the world, through the fraud and treachery of the man whom he had employed to transcribe it, and, as usually happens in such cases, came forth in a very mangled state, under a false title, and without the introductory letter. The friends of the Author, without waiting to consult him, instantly obtained an injunction from the Court of Chancery to stop the sale. What he himself felt, on receiving intelligence of the injury done him by one, from whom his kindness deserved a very different turn, will be best conveyed in his own words. The following is an extract of a letter to a friend, which he dictated on this subject from a sick bed:

"*Bath*, 15*th Feb.* 1797.

"My Dear Laurence,—On the appearance of the advertisement, all newspapers, and all letters have been kept back from me till this time. Mrs. Burke opened your's, and finding that all the measures in the power of Dr. King, yourself, and Mr. Woodford, had been taken to suppress the publication, she ventured to deliver me the letters to-day, which were read to me in my bed, about two o'clock

"This affair does vex me; but I am not in a state of health at present to be deeply vexed at any thing. Whenever this matter comes into discussion, I authorize you to contradict the infamous reports, which (I am informed) have been given out; that this paper had been circulated through the Ministry, and was intended gradually to slide into the press. To the best of my recollection, I never had a clean copy of it but one, which is now in my possession; I never communicated that, but to the Duke of Portland, from whom I had it back again. But the Duke will set this matter to rights, if in reality there were two copies, and he has one. I never shewed it, as they know, to any one of the Ministry. If the Duke has really a copy, I believe his and mine are the only ones that exist, except what was taken by fraud from loose and incorrect papers by S———, to whom I gave the letter to copy. As soon as I began to suspect him capable of any such scandalous breach of trust, you know with what anxiety I got the loose papers out of his hands, not having reason to think that he kept any other. Neither do I believe in fact (unless he meditated this villainy long ago) that he did or does now possess any clean copy. I never communicated that paper to any one out of the very small circle of those private friends, from whom I concealed nothing.

"But I beg you and my friends to be cautious how you let it be understood, that I disclaim any thing but the mere act and intention of publication. I do not retract any one of the sentiments contained in that Memorial, which was and is my justification, addressed to the friends, for whose use alone I intended it. Had I designed it for the public, I should have been more exact and full. It was written in a tone of indignation, in consequence of the resolutions of the Whig Club, which were directly pointed against myself and others, and occasioned our secession from that club; which is the last act of my life that I shall under any circumstances repent. Many temperaments and explanations there would have been, if I had ever had a notion that it should meet the public eye."

In the mean time a large impression, amounting, it is believed, to three thousand copies, had been dispersed over the country. To recall these was impossible; to have expected that any acknowledged production of Mr. Burke, full of matter likely to interest the future historian, could remain for ever in obscurity, would have been folly; and to have passed it over in silent neglect, on the one hand, or, on the other, to have then made any considerable changes in it, might have seemed an abandonment of the principles which it contained. The Author, therefore, discovering that, with the exception of the introductory letter, he had not in fact kept any clean copy, as he had supposed, corrected one of the pamphlets with his own hand. From this, which was found preserved with his other papers, his friends afterwards thought it their duty to give an authentic edition.

The "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity" were originally presented in the form of a Memorial to Mr. Pitt. The Author proposed afterwards to recast the same matter in a new shape. He even advertised the intended work under the title of "Letters on Rural Œconomics, addressed to Mr. Arthur Young;" but he seems to have finished only two or three detached fragments of the first letter. These being too imperfect to be printed alone, his friends inserted them in the Memorial, where they seemed best to cohere. The Memorial had been fairly copied, but did not appear to have been examined or corrected, as some trifling errours of the transcriber were perceptible in it. The manuscript of the fragments was a rough draft from the Author's own hand, much blotted and very confused.

The "Third Letter on the Proposals for Peace" was in its progress through the press when Mr. Burke died. About one half of it was actually revised in print by himself, though not in the exact order of the pages as they now stand. He enlarged his first draft, and separated one great member of his subject, for the purpose of introducing some other matter between. The different parcels of manuscript, designed to intervene, were discovered. One of them he seemed to have gone over himself, and to have improved and augmented. The other, (fortunately the smaller,) was much more imperfect, just as it was taken from his mouth by dictation. No important change, none at all affecting the meaning of any passage, has been made in either, though in the more imperfect parcel, some latitude of discretion in subordinate points was necessarily used.

There is, however, a considerable member, for the greater part of which, Mr. Burke's reputation is not responsible: this is the inquiry into the condition of the higher classes. The summary of the whole topic indeed, nearly as it stands, was found, together with a marginal reference to the bankrupt-list, in his own hand-writing; and the actual conclusion of the letter was dictated by him, but never received his subsequent correction. He had also preserved, as materials for this branch of the subject, some scattered hints, documents, and

parts of a correspondence on the state of the country. He was, however, prevented from working on them, by the want of some authentic and official information, for which he had been long anxiously waiting, in order to ascertain, to the satisfaction of the public, what with his usual sagacity he had fully anticipated from his own personal observation, to his own private conviction. At length the reports of the different Committees, which had been appointed by the two Houses of Parliament, amply furnished him with evidence for this purpose. Accordingly he read and considered them with attention; but for any thing beyond this the season was now past. The Supreme Disposer of all, against whose inscrutable counsels it is vain as well as impious to murmur, did not permit him to enter on the execution of the task which he meditated. It was resolved, therefore, by one of his friends, after much hesitation, and under a very painful responsibility, to make such an attempt as he could at supplying the void; especially because the insufficiency of our resources for the continuance of the war was understood to have been the principal objection urged against the two former "Letters on the Proposals for Peace." In performing with reverential diffidence this duty of friendship, care has been taken not to attribute to Mr. Burke any sentiment which is not most explicitly known, from repeated conversations, and from much correspondence, to have been decidedly entertained by that illustrious man. One passage of nearly three pages, containing a censure of our defensive system, is borrowed from a private letter, which he began to dictate, with an intention of comprising in it the short result of his opinions, but which he afterwards abandoned, when, a little time before his death, his health appeared in some degree to amend, and he hoped that Providence might have spared him at least to complete the larger public letter, which he then proposed to resume.

In the preface to the former edition of this letter, a fourth was mentioned as being in possession of Mr. Burke's friends. It was in fact announced by the Author himself, in the conclusion of the second, which it was then designed to follow. He intended, he said, "to proceed next on the question of the facilities possessed by the French Republic, *from the internal state of other nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends; and, as his notions were controverted, to take notice of what, in that way, had been recommended to him." The vehicle which he had chosen for this part of his plan was an answer to a pamphlet which was supposed to come from high authority, and was circulated by Ministers with great industry, at the time of its appearance in October, 1795, immediately previous to that Session of Parliament when his Majesty for the first time declared, that the appearance of any disposition in the enemy to negotiate for general peace, should not fail to be met with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect. In truth, the answer, which is full of spirit and vivacity, was written in the latter end of the same year, but was laid aside when the question assumed a more serious aspect, from the commencement of an actual negotiation, which gave rise to the series of printed letters. Afterwards, he began to rewrite it, with a view of accommodating it to his new purpose. The greater part, however, still remained in its original state; and several heroes of the Revolution, who are there celebrated, having in the interval passed off the public stage, a greater liberty of insertion and alteration than his friends, on consideration, have thought allowable, would be necessary to adapt it to that place in the series for which it was ultimately designed by the Author. This piece, therefore, addressed, as the title originally stood, to his noble friend, Earl Fitzwilliam, will be given the first in the supplemental volumes, which will be hereafter added to complete this edition of the Author's works.

The tracts, most of them in manuscript, which have been already selected as fit for this purpose, will probably furnish four or five volumes more, to be printed uniformly with this edition. The principal piece is entitled "An Essay towards an Abridgment of the English History;" and reaches from the earliest period down to the conclusion of the reign of King John. It is written with much depth of antiquarian research, directed by the mind of an intelligent statesman. This alone, as far as can be conjectured, will form more than one volume. Another entire volume also, at least, will be filled with his letters to public men on public affairs, especially those of France. This supplement will be sent to the press without delay.

Mr. Burke's more familiar correspondence will be reserved, as authorities to accompany a narrative of his life, which will conclude the whole. The period during which he flourished was one of the most memorable of our annals. It comprehended the acquisition of one empire in the east, the loss of another in the west, and the total subversion of the ancient system of Europe by the French Revolution; with all

which events, the history of his life is necessarily and intimately connected, as indeed it also is, much more than is generally known, with the state of literature and the elegant arts. Such a subject of biography cannot be dismissed with a slight and rapid touch; nor can it be treated in a manner worthy of it, from the information, however authentic and extensive, which the industry of any one man may have accumulated. Many important communications have been received, but some materials, which relate to the pursuits of his early years, and which are known to be in existence, have been hitherto kept back, notwithstanding repeated inquiries and applications. It is, therefore, once more earnestly requested, that all persons who call themselves the friends or admirers of the late Edmund Burke, will have the goodness to transmit, without delay, any notices of that, or of any other kind, which may happen to be in their possession, or within their reach, to Messrs. Rivington; a respect and kindness to his memory, which will be thankfully acknowledged by those friends to whom, in dying, he committed the sacred trust of his reputation.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

A NEW Edition of the Works of Mr. Burke having been called for by the Public, the opportunity has been taken to make some slight changes, it is hoped for the better.

A different distribution of the contents, while it has made the volumes more nearly equal in their respective bulk, has, at the same time, been fortunately found to produce a more methodical arrangement of the whole. The first volume contains those literary and philosophical works by which Mr. Burke was known, previous to the commencement of his public life as a statesman, and the political pieces which were written by him between the time of his first becoming connected with the Marquis of Rockingham, and his being chosen Member for Bristol. In the second are comprehended all his speeches and pamphlets from his first arrival at Bristol, as a candidate, in the year 1774, to his farewell address from the hustings of that city, in the year 1780; and also what he himself published relative to the affairs of India. The remaining two comprize his works since the French revolution, with the exception of the Letter to Lord Kenmare on the Penal Laws against Irish Catholics, which was probably inserted where it stands from its relation to the subject of the Letter addressed by him, at a later period, to Sir Hercules Langrishe. With the same exception, too, strict regard has been paid to chronological order, which, in the last edition, was in some instances broken, to insert pieces that were not discovered till it was too late to introduce them in their proper places.

In the Appendix to the Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts, the references were found to be confused, and, in many places, erroneous. This probably had arisen from the circumstance that a larger and differently constructed Appendix seems to have been originally designed by Mr. Burke, which, however, he afterwards abridged and altered, while the speech and the notes upon it remained as they were. The text and the documents that support it have throughout been accommodated to each other.

The orthography has been in many cases altered, and an attempt made to reduce it to some certain standard. The rule laid down for the discharge of this task was, that whenever Mr. Burke could be perceived to have been uniform in his mode of spelling, that was considered as decisive; but, where he varied, (and as he was in the habit of writing by dictation, and leaving to others the superintendance of the press, he was peculiarly liable to variations of this sort) the best received authorities were directed to be followed. The reader, it is trusted, will find this object, too much disregarded in modern books, has here been kept in view throughout. The quotations which are interspersed through the works of Mr. Burke, and which were frequently made by him from memory, have been generally compared with the original authors. Several mistakes in printing, of one word for another, by which the sense was either perverted or obscured, are now rectified. Two or three small insertions have also been made from a quarto copy corrected by Mr. Burke himself. From the same source something more has been drawn in the shape of notes, to which are subscribed his initials. Of this number is the explanation of that celebrated phrase, "the swinish multitude:" an explanation which was uniformly given by him to his friends, in conversation on the subject. But another note will probably interest the reader still more, as being strongly expressive of that parental affection which formed so amiable a feature in the character of Mr. Burke. It is in "Reflections on the Revolution in France," Vol. III. where he points out a considerable passage as having been supplied by his "lost son." Several other parts, possibly amounting all together to a page or thereabout, were indicated in the same manner; but, as they in general consist of single sentences, and as the meaning of the mark by which they were distinguished was not actually expressed, it has not been thought necessary to notice them particularly.

A

VINDICATION

OF

NATURAL SOCIETY:

OR, A VIEW OF

THE MISERIES AND EVILS ARISING TO MANKIND

FROM EVERY SPECIES OF

ARTIFICIAL SOCIETY.

IN A LETTER TO LORD * * * *

BY A LATE NOBLE WRITER.

1756.

PREFACE.

Before the philosophical works of Lord Bolingbroke had appeared, great things were expected from the leisure of a man, who from the splendid scene of action, in which his talents had enabled him to make so conspicuous a figure, had retired to employ those talents in the investigation of truth. Philosophy began to congratulate herself upon such a proselyte from the world of business, and hoped to have extended her power under the auspices of such a leader. In the midst of these pleasing expectations, the works themselves at last appeared in *full body*, and with great pomp. Those who searched in them for new discoveries in the mysteries of nature; those who expected something which might explain or direct the operations of the mind; those who hoped to see morality illustrated and enforced; those who looked for new helps to society and government; those who desired to see the characters and passions of mankind delineated; in short, all who consider such things as philosophy, and require some of them at least, in every philosophical work, all these were certainly disappointed; they found the landmarks of science precisely in their former places. and they thought they received but a poor recompense for this disappointment, in seeing every mode of religion attacked in a lively manner, and the foundation of every virtue, and of all government, sapped with great art and much ingenuity. What advantage do we derive from such writings? What delight can a man find in employing a capacity which might be usefully exerted for the noblest purposes, in a sort of sullen labour, in which, if the author could succeed, he is obliged to own, that nothing could be more fatal to mankind than his success?

I cannot conceive how this sort of writers propose to compass the designs they pretend to have in view, by the instruments which they employ. Do they pretend to exalt the mind of man, by proving him no better than a beast? Do they think to enforce the practice of virtue, by denying that vice and virtue are distinguished by good or ill fortune here, or by happiness or misery hereafter? Do they imagine they shall increase our piety, and our reliance on God, by exploding his providence, and insisting that he is neither just nor good? Such are the doctrines which, sometimes concealed, sometimes openly and fully avowed, are found to prevail throughout the writings of Lord Bolingbroke; and such are the reasonings which this noble writer and several others have been pleased to dignify with the name of philosophy. If these are delivered in a specious manner, and in a style above the common, they cannot want a number of admirers of as much docility as can be wished for in disciples. To these the editor of the following little piece has addressed it: there is no reason to conceal the design of it any longer.

The design was, to shew that, without the exertion of any considerable forces, the same engines which were employed for the destruction of religion, might be employed with equal success for the subversion of government; and that specious arguments might be used against those things which they, who doubt of every thing else, will never permit to be questioned. It is an observation which I think Isocrates makes in one of his orations against the sophists, that it is far more easy to maintain a wrong cause, and to support paradoxical opinions to the satisfaction of a common auditory, than to establish a doubtful truth by solid and conclusive arguments. When men find that something can be said in favour of what, on the very proposal, they have thought utterly indefensible, they grow doubtful of their own reason; they are thrown into a sort of pleasing surprize; they run along with the speaker, charmed and captivated to find such a plentiful harvest of reasoning, where all seemed barren and unpromising. This is the fairy land of philosophy. And it very frequently happens, that those pleasing impressions on the imagination, subsist and produce their effect, even after the understanding has been satisfied of their unsubstantial nature. There is a sort of gloss upon ingenious falsehoods, that dazzles the imagination, but which neither belongs to, nor becomes the sober aspect of truth. I have met with a quotation in Lord Coke's reports that pleased me very much, though I do not know from whence he has taken it: "*Interdum fucata falsitas*, (says he,) *in multis est probabilior, et sæpe rationibus vincit nudam veritatem.*" In such cases, the writer has a certain fire and alacrity inspired into him by a consciousness,

that let it fare how it will with the subject, his ingenuity will be sure of applause; and this alacrity becomes much greater if he acts upon the offensive, by the impetuosity that always accompanies an attack, and the unfortunate propensity which mankind have to the finding and exaggerating faults. The editor is satisfied that a mind, which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack every thing the most excellent and venerable; that it would not be difficult to criticise the creation itself; and that if we were to examine the divine fabrics by our ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion, we might with as good colour, and with the same success, make the wisdom and power of God in his creation appear to many no better than foolishness. There is an air of plausibility which accompanies vulgar reasonings and notions taken from the beaten circle of ordinary experience, that is admirably suited to the narrow capacities of some, and to the laziness of others. But this advantage is in great measure lost, when a painful, comprehensive survey of a very complicated matter, and which requires a great variety of considerations, is to be made; when we must seek in a profound subject, not only for arguments, but for new materials of argument, their measures and their method of arrangement; when we must go out of the sphere of our ordinary ideas, and when we can never walk sure, but by being sensible of our blindness. And this we must do, or we do nothing, whenever we examine the result of a reason which is not our own. Even in matters which are, as it were, just within our reach, what would become of the world, if the practice of all moral duties, and the foundations of society, rested upon having their reasons made clear and demonstrative to every individual?

The editor knows that the subject of this letter is not so fully handled as obviously it might; it was not his design to say all that could possibly be said. It had been inexcusable to fill a large volume with the abuse of reason; nor would such an abuse have been tolerable even for a few pages, if some underplot of more consequence than the apparent design, had not been carried on.

Some persons have thought that the advantages of the state of nature ought to have been more fully displayed. This had undoubtedly been a very ample subject for declamation; but they do not consider the character of the piece. The writers against religion, whilst they oppose every system, are wisely careful never to set up any of their own. If some inaccuracies in calculation, in reasoning, or in method, be found, perhaps these will not be looked upon as faults by the admirers of Lord Bolingbroke; who will, the editor is afraid, observe much more of his Lordship's character in such particulars of the following letter, than they are like to find of that rapid torrent of an impetuous and overbearing eloquence, and the variety of rich imagery for which that writer is justly admired.

WORKS

OF

EDMUND BURKE.

A LETTER TO LORD * * * *.

SHALL I venture to say, my Lord, that in our late conversation, you were inclined to the party which you adopted rather by the feelings of your good nature, than by the conviction of your judgment? We laid open the foundations of society, and you feared, that the curiosity of this search might endanger the ruin of the whole fabric. You would readily have allowed my principle, but you dreaded the consequences; you thought, that having once entered upon these reasonings, we might be carried insensibly and irresistibly farther than at first we could either have imagined or wished. But for my part, my Lord, I then thought, and am still of the same opinion, that errour, and not truth, of any kind, is dangerous; that ill conclusions can only flow from false propositions; and that, to know whether any proposition be true or false, it is a preposterous method to examine it by its apparent consequences.

These were the reasons which induced me to go so far into that enquiry; and they are the reasons which direct me in all my enquiries. I had indeed often reflected on that subject before I could prevail on myself to communicate my reflections to any body. They were generally melancholy enough; as those usually are which carry us beyond the mere surface of things; and which would undoubtedly make the lives of all thinking men extremely miserable, if the same philosophy which caused the grief, did not at the same time administer the comfort.

On considering political societies, their origin, their constitution, and their effects, I have sometimes been in a good deal more than doubt, whether the Creator did ever really intend man for a state of happiness. He has mixed in his cup a number of natural evils, (in spite of the boasts of stoicism they are evils,) and every endeavour which the art and policy of mankind has used from the beginning of the world to this day, in order to alleviate, or cure them, has only served to introduce new mischiefs, or to aggravate and inflame the old. Besides this, the mind of man itself is too active and restless a principle ever to settle on the true point of quiet. It discovers every day some craving want in a body, which really wants but little. It every day invents some new artificial rule to guide that nature which, if left to itself, were the best and surest guide. It finds out imaginary beings prescribing imaginary laws; and then, it raises imaginary terrours, to support a belief in the beings, and an obedience to the laws. Many things have been said, and very well undoubtedly, on the subjection in which we should preserve our bodies to the government of our understanding; but enough has not been said upon the restraint which our bodily necessities ought to lay on the extravagant sublimities and eccentric rovings of our minds. The body, or, as some love to call it, our inferiour nature, is wiser in its own plain way, and attends its own business more directly than the mind with all its boasted subtilty.

In the state of nature, without question, mankind was subjected to many and great inconveniences. Want of union, want of mutual assistance, want of a common arbitrator to resort to in their differences. These were evils which they could not but have felt pretty severely on many occasions. The original children of the earth lived with their brethren of the other kinds in much equality. Their diet must have been confined almost wholly to the vegetable kind; and the same tree, which in its flourishing state, produced them berries, in its decay gave them an habitation. The mutual desires of the sexes uniting their bodies and affections, and the children, which are the results of these intercourses, introduced first the notion of society, and taught its conveniencies. This society, founded in natural appetites and instincts, and not in any positive institution, I shall call *natural society*. Thus far nature went and succeeded; but man would go farther. The great errour of our nature is, not to know where to stop, not to be satisfied

with any reasonable acquirement; not to compound with our condition; but to lose all we have gained by an insatiable pursuit after more. Man found a considerable advantage by this union of many persons to form one family; he therefore judged that he would find his account proportionably in an union of many families into one body politic. And as nature has formed no bond of union to hold them together, he supplied this defect by *laws*.

This is *political society*. And hence the sources of what are usually called states, civil societies, or governments; into some form of which, more extended or restrained, all mankind have gradually fallen. And since it has so happened, and that we owe an implicit reverence to all the institutions of our ancestors, we shall consider these institutions with all that modesty with which we ought to conduct ourselves in examining a received opinion; but with all that freedom and candour which we owe to truth wherever we find it, or however it may contradict our own notions, or oppose our own interests. There is a most absurd and audacious method of reasoning avowed by some bigots and enthusiasts, and through fear assented to by some wiser and better men; it is this: they argue against a fair discussion of popular prejudices, because, say they, though they would be found without any reasonable support, yet the discovery might be productive of the most dangerous consequences. Absurd and blasphemous notion! as if all happiness was not connected with the practice of virtue, which necessarily depends upon the knowledge of truth; that is, upon the knowledge of those unalterable relations which Providence has ordained that every thing should bear to every other. These relations, which are truth itself, the foundation of virtue, and consequently, the only measures of happiness, should be likewise the only measures by which we should direct our reasoning. To these we should conform in good earnest; and not think to force nature, and the whole order of her system, by a compliance with our pride, and folly, to conform to our artificial regulations. It is by a conformity to this method we owe the discovery of the few truths we know, and the little liberty and rational happiness we enjoy. We have something fairer play than a reasoner could have expected formerly; and we derive advantages from it, which are very visible.

The fabric of superstition has in this our age and nation received much ruder shocks than it had ever felt before; and through the chinks and breaches of our prison, we see such glimmerings of light, and feel such refreshing airs of liberty, as daily raise our ardour for more. The miseries derived to mankind from superstition, under the name of religion, and of ecclesiastical tyranny, under the name of church government, have been clearly and usefully exposed. We begin to think and to act from reason and from nature alone. This is true of several, but still is by far the majority in the same old state of blindness and slavery; and much is it to be feared that we shall perpetually relapse, whilst the real productive cause of all this superstitious folly, enthusiastical nonsense, and holy tyranny, holds a reverend place in the estimation even of those who are otherwise enlightened.

Civil government borrows a strength from ecclesiastical; and artificial laws receive a sanction from artificial revelations. The ideas of religion and government are closely connected; and whilst we receive government as a thing necessary, or even useful to our well-being, we shall in spite of us draw in, as a necessary, though undesirable consequence, an artificial religion of some kind or other. To this the vulgar will always be voluntary slaves; and even those of a rank of understanding superiour, will now and then involuntarily feel its influence. It is therefore of the deepest concernment to us to be set right in this point; and to be well satisfied whether civil government be such a protector from natural evils, and such a nurse and increaser of blessings, as those of warm imaginations promise. In such a discussion, far am I from proposing in the least to reflect on our most wise form of government; no more than I would in the freer parts of my philosophical writings mean to object to the piety, truth and perfection of our most excellent church. Both I am sensible have their foundations on a rock. No discovery of truth can prejudice them. On the contrary, the more closely the origin of religion and government are examined, the more clearly their excellencies must appear. They come purified from the fire. My business is not with them. Having entered a protest against all objections from these quarters, I may the more freely enquire from history and experience, how far policy has contributed in all times to alleviate those evils which Providence, that perhaps has designed us for a state of imperfection, has imposed; how far our physical skill has cured our constitutional disorders; and whether it may not have introduced new ones, curable perhaps by no skill.

In looking over any state to form a judgment on it; it presents itself in two lights, the external and the internal. The first, that relation

which it bears in point of friendship or enmity to other states. The second, that relation which its component parts, the governing and the governed, bear to each other. The first part of the external view of all states, their relation as friends, makes so trifling a figure in history, that I am very sorry to say, it affords me but little matter on which to expatiate. The good offices done by one nation to its neighbour;* the support given in public distress; the relief afforded in general calamity; the protection granted in emergent danger: the mutual return of kindness and civility, would afford a very ample and very pleasing subject for history. But, alas! all the history of all times, concerning all nations, does not afford matter enough to fill ten pages, though it should be spun out by the wire-drawing amplification of a Guicciardini himself. The glaring side is that of enmity. War is the matter which fills all history, and consequently the only or almost the only view in which we can see the external of political society, is in a hostile shape; and the only actions, to which we have always seen, and still see all of them intent, are such as tend to the destruction of one another. War, says Machiavel, ought to be the only study of a prince; and by a prince, he means every sort of state, however constituted. He ought, says this great political doctor, to consider peace only as a breathing-time, which gives him leisure to contrive, and furnishes ability to execute military plans. A meditation on the conduct of political societies made old Hobbes imagine that war was the state of nature; and truly, if a man judged of the individuals of our race by their conduct when united and packed into nations and kingdoms, he might imagine that every sort of virtue was unnatural and foreign to the mind of man.

The first accounts we have of mankind are but so many accounts of their butcheries. All empires have been cemented in blood; and in those early periods when the race of mankind began first to form themselves into parties and combinations, the first effect of the combination, and indeed the end for which it seems purposely formed, and best calculated, is their mutual destruction. All ancient history is dark and uncertain. One thing however is clear. There were conquerors, and conquests in those days; and consequently, all that devastation, by which they are formed, and all that oppression by which they are maintained. We know little of Sesostris, but that he led out of Egypt an army of above 700,000 men; that he over-ran the Mediterranean coast as far as Colchis; that in some places he met but little resistance, and of course shed not a great deal of blood; but that he found in others, a people who knew the value of their liberties, and sold them dear. Whoever considers the army this conqueror headed, the space he traversed, and the opposition he frequently met, with the natural accidents of sickness, and the dearth and badness of provision to which he must have been subject in the variety of climates and countries his march lay through; if he knows any thing, he must know, that even the conqueror's army must have suffered greatly; and that, of this immense number, but a very small part could have returned to enjoy the plunder accumulated by the loss of so many of their companions, and the devastation of so considerable a part of the world. Considering, I say, the vast army headed by this conqueror, whose unwieldy weight was almost alone sufficient to wear down its strength, it will be far from excess to suppose that one half was lost in the expedition. If this was the state of the victorious, and, from the circumstances, it must have been this at the least; the vanquished must have had a much heavier loss, as the greatest slaughter is always in the flight, and great carnage did in those times and countries ever attend the first rage of conquest. It will therefore be very reasonable to allow on their account as much as, added to the losses of the conqueror, may amount to a million of deaths, and then we shall see this conqueror, the oldest we have on the records of history, (though, as we have observed before, the chronology of these remote times is extremely uncertain,) opening the scene by a destruction of at least one million of his species, unprovoked but by his ambition, without any motives but pride, cruelty, and madness, and without any benefit to himself; (for Justin expressly tells us he did not maintain his conquests;) but solely to make so many people, in so distant countries, feel experimentally, how severe a scourge Providence intends for the human race, when he gives one man the power over many, and arms his naturally impotent, and feeble rage, with the hands of millions, who know no common principle of action, but a blind obedience to the passions of their ruler.

The next personage who figures in the tragedies of this ancient theatre is Semiramis:

* Had his Lordship lived to our days, to have seen the noble relief given by this nation to the distressed Portuguese, he had perhaps owned this part of his argument a little weakened, but we do not think ourselves entitled to alter his Lordship's words, but that we are bound to follow him exactly.

for we have no particulars of Ninus, but that he made immense and rapid conquests, which doubtless were not compassed without the usual carnage. We see an army of above three millions employed by this martial queen in a war against the Indians. We see the Indians arming a yet greater; and we behold a war continued with much fury, and with various success. This ends in the retreat of the queen, with scarce a third of the troops employed in the expedition; an expedition, which at this rate must have cost two millions of souls on her part; and it is not unreasonable to judge that the country which was the seat of war must have been an equal sufferer. But I am content to detract from this, and to suppose that the Indians lost only half so much, and then the account stands thus: In this war alone, (for Semiramis had other wars,) in this single reign, and in this one spot of the globe, did three millions of souls expire, with all the horrid and shocking circumstances which attend all wars, and in a quarrel, in which none of the sufferers could have the least rational concern.

The Babylonian, Assyrian, Median, and Persian monarchies must have poured out seas of blood in their formation, and in their destruction. The armies and fleets of Xerxes, their numbers, the glorious stand made against them, and the unfortunate event of all his mighty preparations, are known to every body. In this expedition, draining half Asia of its inhabitants, he led an army of about two millions to be slaughtered, and wasted, by a thousand fatal accidents, in the same place where his predecessors had before by a similar madness consumed the flower of so many kingdoms, and wasted the force of so extensive an empire. It is a cheap calculation to say, that the Persian empire in its wars, against the Greeks and Scythians, threw away at least four millions of its subjects, to say nothing of its other wars, and the losses sustained in them. These were their losses abroad; but the war was brought home to them, first by Agesilaus, and afterwards, by Alexander. I have not, in this retreat, the books necessary to make very exact calculations; nor is it necessary to give more than hints to one of your Lordship's erudition. You will recollect his uninterrupted series of success. You will run over his battles. You will call to mind the carnage which was made. You will give a glance at the whole, and you will agree with me; that to form this hero no less than twelve hundred thousand lives must have been sacrificed; but no sooner had he fallen himself a sacrifice to his vices, than a thousand breaches were made for ruin to enter, and give the last hand to this scene of misery and destruction. His kingdom was rent and divided; which served to employ the more distinct parts to tear each other to pieces, and bury the whole in blood and slaughter. The kings of Syria and of Egypt, the kings of Pergamus and Macedon, without intermission worried each other for above two hundred years; until at last a strong power arising in the west, rushed in upon them and silenced their tumults, by involving all the contending parties in the same destruction. It is little to say, that the contentions between the successors of Alexander depopulated that part of the world of at least two millions.

The struggle between the Macedonians and Greeks, and before that, the disputes of the Greek commonwealths among themselves, for an unprofitable superiority, form one of the bloodiest scenes in history. One is astonished how such a small spot could furnish men sufficient to sacrifice to the pitiful ambition of possessing five or six thousand more acres, or two or three more villages: yet to see the acrimony and bitterness with which this was disputed between the Athenians and Lacedemonians; what armies cut off; what fleets sunk and burnt; what a number of cities sacked, and their inhabitants slaughtered, and captived; one would be induced to believe the decision of the fate of mankind at least, depended upon it! But these disputes ended as all such ever have done, and ever will do; in a real weakness of all parties; a momentary shadow, and dream of power in some one; and the subjection of all to the yoke of a stranger, who knows how to profit of their divisions. This at least was the case of the Greeks; and sure, from the earliest accounts of them, to their absorption into the Roman empire, we cannot judge that their intestine divisions, and their foreign wars consumed less than three millions of their inhabitants.

What an Aceldama, what a field of blood Sicily has been in ancient times, whilst the mode of its government was controverted between the republican and tyrannical parties, and the possession struggled for by the natives, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the Romans, your Lordship will easily recollect. You will remember the total destruction of such bodies as an army of 300,000 men. You will find every page of its history dyed in blood, and blotted and confounded by tumults, rebellions, massacres, assassinations, proscriptions, and a series of horrour beyond the histories perhaps of any other nation in the world;

though the histories of all nations are made up of similar matter. I once more excuse myself in point of exactness for want of books. But I shall estimate the slaughters in this island but at two millions; which your Lordship will find much short of the reality.

Let us pass by the wars and the consequences of them, which wasted Grecia-Magna, before the Roman power prevailed in that part of Italy. They are perhaps exaggerated; therefore I shall only rate them at one million. Let us hasten to open that great scene which establishes the Roman empire, and forms the grand catastrophe of the ancient drama. This empire, whilst in its infancy, began by an effusion of human blood scarcely credible. The neighbouring little states teemed for new destruction: the Sabines, the Samnites, the Æqui, the Volsci, the Hetrurians, were broken by a series of slaughters which had no interruption, for some hundreds of years; slaughters which upon all sides consumed more than two millions of the wretched people. The Gauls rushing into Italy about this time, added the total destruction of their own armies to those of the ancient inhabitants. In short, it were hardly possible to conceive a more horrid and bloody picture, if that the Punic wars that ensued soon after did not present one, that far exceeds it. Here we find that climax of devastation and ruin, which seemed to shake the whole earth. The extent of this war which vexed so many nations, and both elements, and the havoc of the human species caused in both, really astonishes beyond expression, when it is nakedly considered, and those matters which are apt to divert our attention from it, the characters, actions, and designs of the persons concerned, are not taken into the account. These wars, I mean those called the Punic wars, could not have stood the human race in less than three millions of the species. And yet this forms but a part only, and a very small part, of the havoc caused by the Roman ambition. The war with Mithridates was very little less bloody; that prince cut off at one stroke 150,000 Romans by a massacre. In that war Sylla destroyed 300,000 men at Cheronea. He defeated Mithridates' army under Dorilaus, and slew 300,000. This great and unfortunate prince lost another 300,000 before Cyzicum. In the course of the war he had innumerable other losses; and having many intervals of success, he revenged them severely. He was at last totally overthrown; and he crushed to pieces the king of Armenia his ally by the greatness of his ruin. All who had connexions with him shared the same fate. The merciless genius of Sylla had its full scope; and the streets of Athens were not the only ones which ran with blood. At this period, the sword, glutted with foreign slaughter, turned its edge upon the bowels of the Roman republic itself; and presented a scene of cruelties and treasons enough almost to obliterate the memory of all the external devastations. I intended, my Lord, to have proceeded in a sort of method in estimating the numbers of mankind cut off in these wars which we have on record. But I am obliged to alter my design. Such a tragical uniformity of havoc and murder would disgust your Lordship as much as it would me; and I confess I already feel my eyes ache by keeping them so long intent on so bloody a prospect. I shall observe little on the Servile, the Social, the Gallic and Spanish wars; nor upon those with Jugurtha, nor Antiochus, nor many others equally important, and carried on with equal fury. The butcheries of Julius Cæsar alone, are calculated by somebody else; the numbers he has been a means of destroying have been reckoned at 1,200,000. But to give your Lordship an idea that may serve as a standard, by which to measure, in some degree, the others; you will turn your eyes on Judea; a very inconsiderable spot of the earth in itself, though ennobled by the singular events which had their rise in that country.

This spot happened, it matters not here by what means, to become at several times extremely populous, and to supply men for slaughters scarcely credible, if other well-known and well-attested ones had not given them a colour. The first settling of the Jews here, was attended by an almost entire extirpation of all the former inhabitants. Their own civil wars, and those with their petty neighbours, consumed vast multitudes almost every year for several centuries; and the irruptions of the kings of Babylon and Assyria made immense ravages. Yet we have their history but partially, in an indistinct confused manner; so that I shall only throw the strong point of light upon that part which coincides with Roman history, and of that part only on the point of time when they received the great and final stroke which made them no more a nation; a stroke which is allowed to have cut off little less than two millions of that people. I say nothing of the loppings made from that stock whilst it stood; nor from the suckers that grew out of the old root ever since. But if in this inconsiderable part of the globe, such a carnage has been made in two or three short reigns, and that this great carnage, great as it

is, makes but a minute part of what the histories of that people inform us they suffered; what shall we judge of countries more extended, and which have waged wars by far more considerable?

Instances of this sort compose the uniform of history. But there have been periods when no less than universal destruction to the race of mankind seems to have been threatened. Such was that, when the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns poured into Gaul, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Africa, carrying destruction before them as they advanced, and leaving horrid desarts every way behind them. *Vastum ubique silentium, secreti colles; fumantia procul tecta, nemo exploratoribus obvius*, is what Tacitus calls *facies victoriæ*. It is always so; but was here emphatically so. From the north proceeded the swarms of Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, who ran towards the south into Africa itself, which suffered as all to the north had done. About this time, another torrent of barbarians, animated by the same fury, and encouraged by the same success, poured out of the south, and ravaged all to the north-east and west, to the remotest parts of Persia on one hand, and to the banks of the Loire or further on the other; destroying all the proud and curious monuments of human art, that not even the memory might seem to survive of the former inhabitants. What has been done since, and what will continue to be done while the same inducements to war continue, I shall not dwell upon. I shall only in one word mention the horrid effects of bigotry and avarice, in the conquest of Spanish America; a conquest on a low estimation effected by the murder of ten millions of the species. I shall draw to a conclusion of this part, by making a general calculation of the whole. I think I have actually mentioned above thirty-six millions. I have not particularized any more. I don't pretend to exactness; therefore, for the sake of a general view, I shall lay together all those actually slain in battles, or who have perished in a no less miserable manner by the other destructive consequences of war from the beginning of the world to this day, in the four parts of it, at a thousand times as much; no exaggerated calculation, allowing for time and extent. We have not perhaps spoke of the five-hundredth part; I am sure I have not of what is actually ascertained in history; but how much of these butcheries are only expressed in generals, what part of time history has never reached, and what vast spaces of the habitable globe it has not embraced, I need not mention to your Lordship. I need not enlarge on those torrents of silent and inglorious blood which have glutted the thirsty sands of Afric, or discoloured the polar snow, or fed the savage forests of America for so many ages of continual war. Shall I, to justify my calculations from the charge of extravagance, add to the account those skirmishes which happen in all wars, without being singly of sufficient dignity in mischief, to merit a place in history, but which by their frequency compensate for this comparative innocence; shall I inflame the account by those general massacres which have devoured whole cities and nations; those wasting pestilences, those consuming famines, and all those furies that follow in the train of war? I have no need to exaggerate; and I have purposely avoided a parade of eloquence on this occasion. I should despise it upon any occasion; else in mentioning these slaughters, it is obvious how much the whole might be heightened, by an affecting description of the horrours that attend the wasting of kingdoms, and sacking of cities. But I do not write to the vulgar, nor to that which only governs the vulgar, their passions. I go upon a naked and moderate calculation, just enough, without a pedantical exactness, to give your Lordship some feeling of the effects of political society. I charge the whole of these effects on political society. I avow the charge, and I shall presently make it good to your Lordship's satisfaction. The numbers I particularized are about thirty-six millions. Besides those killed in battles I have said something, not half what the matter would have justified, but something I have said, concerning the consequences of war even more dreadful than that monstrous carnage itself which shocks our humanity, and almost staggers our belief. So that allowing me in my exuberance one way, for my deficiency in the other, you will find me not unreasonable. I think the numbers of men now upon earth are computed at five hundred millions at the most. Here the slaughter of mankind, on what you will call a small calculation, amounts to upwards of seventy times the number of souls this day on the globe: a point which may furnish matter of reflection to one less inclined to draw consequences than your Lordship.

I now come to shew that political society is justly chargeable with much the greatest part of this destruction of the species. To give the fairest play to every side of the question, I will own that there is a haughtiness, and fierceness in human nature, which will cause innumerable broils, place men in what situation you please; but owning this, I still insist in charging it to political regulations, that these

broils are so frequent, so cruel, and attended with consequences so deplorable. In a state of nature, it had been impossible to find a number of men, sufficient for such slaughters, agreed in the same bloody purpose; or allowing that they might have come to such an agreement, (an impossible supposition,) yet the means that simple nature has supplied them with, are by no means adequate to such an end; many scratches, many bruises undoubtedly would be received upon all hands; but only a few, a very few deaths. Society, and politics, which have given us these destructive views, have given us also the means of satisfying them. From the earliest dawnings of policy to this day, the inventions of men have been sharpening and improving the mystery of murder, from the first rude essays of clubs and stones, to the present perfection of gunnery, cannoneering, bombarding, mining, and all these species of artificial, learned, and refined cruelty, in which we are now so expert, and which make a principal part of what politicians have taught us to believe is our principal glory.

How far mere nature would have carried us, we may judge by the example of those animals, who still follow her laws, and even of those to whom she has given dispositions more fierce, and arms more terrible than ever she intended we should use. It is an incontestible truth, that there is more havoc made in one year by men, of men, than has been made by all the lions, tygers, panthers, ounces, leopards, hyenas, rhinoceroses, elephants, bears, and wolves, upon their several species, since the beginning of the world; though these agree ill enough with each other, and have a much greater proportion of rage and fury in their composition than we have. But with respect to you, ye legislators, ye civilizers of mankind! ye Orpheuses, Moseses, Minoses, Solons, Theseuses, Lycurguses, Numas! with respect to you be it spoken, your regulations have done more mischief in cold blood, than all the rage of the fiercest animals in their greatest terrours, or furies, has ever done, or ever could do!

These evils are not accidental. Whoever will take the pains to consider the nature of society, will find they result directly from its constitution. For as *subordination*, or, in other words, the reciprocation of tyranny, and slavery, is requisite to support these societies, the interest, the ambition, the malice, or the revenge, nay even the whim and caprice of one ruling man among them, is enough to arm all the rest, without any private views of their own, to the worst and blackest purposes; and what is at once lamentable, and ridiculous, these wretches engage under those banners with a fury greater than if they were animated by revenge for their own proper wrongs.

It is no less worth observing, that this artificial division of mankind, into separate societies, is a perpetual source in itself of hatred and dissension among them. The names which distinguish them are enough to blow up hatred, and rage. Examine history; consult present experience; and you will find, that far the greater part of the quarrels between several nations, had scarce any other occasion, than, that these nations were different combinations of people, and called by different names; to an Englishman, the name of a Frenchman, a Spaniard, an Italian, much more a Turk, or a Tartar, raises of course ideas of hatred, and contempt. If you would inspire this compatriot of ours with pity or regard, for one of these; would you not hide that distinction? You would not pray him to compassionate the poor Frenchman, or the unhappy German. Far from it; you would speak of him as a *foreigner*, an accident to which all are liable. You would represent him as a *man*, one partaking with us of the same common nature, and subject to the same law. There is something so averse from our nature in these artificial political distinctions, that we need no other trumpet to kindle us to war, and destruction. But there is something so benign and healing in the general voice of humanity, that maugre all our regulations to prevent it, the simple name of man applied properly, never fails to work a salutary effect.

This natural unpremeditated effect of policy on the unpossessed passions of mankind, appears on other occasions. The very name of a politician, a statesman, is sure to cause terrour and hatred; it has always connected with it the ideas of treachery, cruelty, fraud and tyranny; and those writers who have faithfully unveiled the mysteries of state-freemasonry, have ever been held in general detestation, for even knowing so perfectly a theory so detestable. The case of Machiavel seems at first sight something hard in that respect. He is obliged to bear the iniquities of those whose maxims and rules of government he published. His speculation is more abhorred than their practice.

But if there were no other arguments against artificial society than this I am going to mention, methinks it ought to fall by this one only. All writers on the science of policy are agreed, and they agree with experience, that all go-

vernments must frequently infringe the rules of justice to support themselves; that truth must give way to dissimulation; honesty to convenience; and humanity itself to the reigning interest. The whole of this mystery of iniquity is called the reason of state. It is a reason which I own I cannot penetrate. What sort of a protection is this of the general right, that is maintained by infringing the rights of particulars? What sort of justice is this, which is enforced by breaches of its own laws? These paradoxes I leave to be solved by the able heads of legislators and politicians. For my part, I say what a plain man would say on such an occasion. I can never believe, that any institution agreeable to nature, and proper for mankind, could find it necessary, or even expedient in any case whatsoever, to do, what the best and worthiest instincts of mankind warn us to avoid. But no wonder, that what is set up in opposition to the state of nature, should preserve itself by trampling upon the law of nature.

To prove that these sorts of policed societies are a violation offered to nature, and a constraint upon the human mind, it needs only to look upon the sanguinary measures, and instruments of violence which are every where used to support them. Let us take a review of the dungeons, whips, chains, racks, gibbets, with which every society is abundantly stored, by which hundreds of victims are annually offered up to support a dozen or two in pride and madness, and millions in an abject servitude and dependence. There was a time, when I looked with a reverential awe on these mysteries of policy; but age, experience, and philosophy, have rent the veil; and I view this *sanctum sanctorum*, at least, without any enthusiastic admiration. I acknowledge indeed, the necessity of such a proceeding in such institutions; but I must have a very mean opinion of institutions where such proceedings are necessary.

It is a misfortune, that in no part of the globe natural liberty and natural religion are to be found pure, and free from the mixture of political adulterations. Yet we have implanted in us, by Providence, ideas, axioms, rules, of what is pious, just, fair, honest, which no political craft, nor learned sophistry, can entirely expel from our breasts. By these we judge, and we cannot otherwise judge of the several artificial modes of religion and society, and determine of them as they approach to, or recede from this standard.

The simplest form of government is *despotism*, where all the inferiour orbs of power are moved merely by the will of the Supreme, and all that are subjected to them, directed in the same manner, merely by the occasional will of the magistrate. This form, as it is the most simple, so it is infinitely the most general. Scarce any part of the world is exempted from its power. And in those few places where men enjoy what they call liberty, it is continually in a tottering situation, and makes greater and greater strides to that gulph of despotism which at last swallows up every species of government. The manner of ruling being directed merely by the will of the weakest, and generally the worst man in the society, becomes the most foolish and capricious thing, at the same time that it is the most terrible and destructive, that well can be conceived. In a despotism the principal person finds, that let the want, misery, and indigence of his subjects be what they will, he can yet possess abundantly of every thing to gratify his most insatiable wishes. He does more. He finds that these gratifications increase in proportion to the wretchedness and slavery of his subjects. Thus encouraged, both by passion and interest, to trample on the public welfare, and by his station placed above both shame and fear, he proceeds to the most horrid and shocking outrages upon mankind. Their persons become victims of his suspicions. The slightest displeasure is death; and a disagreeable aspect is often as great a crime as high treason. In the court of Nero, a person of learning, of unquestioned merit, and of unsuspected loyalty, was put to death for no other reason than that he had a pedantic countenance which displeased the emperor. This very monster of mankind appeared in the beginning of his reign to be a person of virtue. Many of the greatest tyrants on the records of history have begun their reigns in the fairest manner. But the truth is, this unnatural power corrupts both the heart and the understanding. And to prevent the least hope of amendment, a king is ever surrounded by a crowd of infamous flatterers, who find their account in keeping him from the least light of reason, till all ideas of rectitude and justice are utterly erased from his mind. When Alexander had in his fury inhumanly butchered one of his best friends and bravest captains; on the return of reason he began to conceive an horrour suitable to the guilt of such a murder. In this juncture, his council came to his assistance. But what did his council? They found him out a philosopher who gave him comfort. And in what manner did this philosopher comfort him for the loss of such a man, and heal his conscience, flagrant with the

smart of such a crime? You have the matter at length in Plutarch. He told him; "*that let a sovereign do what he will, all his actions are just and lawful, because they are his.*" The palaces of all princes abound with such courtly philosophers. The consequence was such as might be expected. He grew every day a monster more abandoned to unnatural lust, to debauchery, to drunkenness, and to murder. And yet this was originally a great man, of uncommon capacity, and a strong propensity to virtue. But unbounded power proceeds step by step, until it has eradicated every laudable principle. It has been remarked, that there is no prince so bad, whose favourites and ministers are not worse. There is hardly any prince without a favourite, by whom he is governed in as arbitrary a manner as he governs the wretches subjected to him. Here the tyranny is doubled. There are two courts, and two interests; both very different from the interests of the people. The favourite knows that the regard of a tyrant is as inconstant and capricious as that of a woman; and concluding his time to be short, he makes haste to fill up the measure of his iniquity, in rapine, in luxury, and in revenge. Every avenue to the throne is shut up. He oppresses, and ruins the people, whilst he persuades the prince, that those murmurs, raised by his own oppression are the effects of disaffection to the prince's government. Then is the natural violence of despotism inflamed, and aggravated by hatred and revenge. To deserve well of the state is a crime against the prince. To be popular, and to be a traitor, are considered as synonymous terms. Even virtue is dangerous, as an aspiring quality, that claims an esteem by itself, and independent of the countenance of the court. What has been said of the chief, is true of the inferiour officers of this species of government; each in his province exercising the same tyranny, and grinding the people by an oppression, the more severely felt, as it is near them, and exercised by base and subordinate persons. For the gross of the people; they are considered as a mere herd of cattle; and really in a little time become no better; all principle of honest pride, all sense of the dignity of their nature, is lost in their slavery. The day, says Homer, which makes man a slave, takes away half his worth; and in fact, he loses every impulse to action, but that low and base one of fear.—In this kind of government, human nature is not only abused, and insulted, but it is actually degraded and sunk into a species of brutality. The consideration of this made Mr. Locke say, with great justice, that a government of this kind was worse than anarchy; indeed it is so abhorred and detested, by all who live under forms that have a milder appearance, that there is scarce a rational man in Europe, that would not prefer death to Asiatic despotism. Here then we have the acknowledgment of a great philosopher, that an irregular state of nature is preferable to such a government; we have the consent of all sensible and generous men, who carry it yet further, and avow that death itself is preferable; and yet this species of government, so justly condemned, and so generally detested, is what infinitely the greater part of mankind groan under, and have groaned under from the beginning. So that by sure and uncontested principles, the greatest part of the governments on earth must be concluded tyrannies, impostures, violations of the natural rights of mankind, and worse than the most disorderly anarchies. How much other forms exceed this, we shall consider immediately.

In all parts of the world, mankind, however debased, retains still the sense of *feeling*; the weight of tyranny, at last, becomes insupportable; but the remedy is not so easy; in general, the only remedy by which they attempt to cure the tyranny, is to change the tyrant. This is, and always was the case, for the greater part. In some countries, however, were found men of more penetration; who discovered, "*that to live by one man's will, was the cause of all men's misery.*" They therefore changed their former method, and assembling the men in their several societies, the most respectable for their understanding and fortunes, they confided to them the charge of the public welfare. This originally formed what is called an *aristocracy*. They hoped, it would be impossible that such a number could ever join in any design against the general good; and they promised themselves a great deal of security and happiness, from the united counsels of so many able and experienced persons. But it is now found, by abundant experience, that an *aristocracy*, and a *despotism*, differ but in name; and that a people, who are in general excluded from any share of the legislative are to all intents and purposes, as much slaves, when twenty, independent of them, govern, as when but one domineers. The tyranny is even more felt, as every individual of the nobles has the haughtiness of a sultan; the people are more miserable, as they seem on the verge of liberty, from which they are for ever debarred; this fallacious idea of liberty, whilst it presents a vain shadow of happiness to the subject, binds faster the chains of his subjection. What is left undone, by the natural avarice and pride of those who are

raised above the others, is completed by their suspicions, and their dread of losing an authority, which has no support in the common utility of the nation. A Genoese, or a Venetian republic, is a concealed *despotism*; where you find the same pride of the rulers, the same base subjection of the people, the same bloody maxims of a suspicious policy. In one respect, the *aristocracy* is worse than the *despotism*. A body politic, whilst it retains its authority, never changes its maxims; a *despotism*, which is this day horrible to a supreme degree, by the caprice natural to the heart of man, may, by the same caprice otherwise exerted, be as lovely the next; in a succession, it is possible to meet with some good princes. If there have been Tiberiuses, Caligulas, Neros, there have been likewise the serener days of Vespasians, Tituses, Trajans, and Antonines; but a body politic is not influenced by caprice or whim; it proceeds in a regular manner; its succession is insensible; and every man as he enters it, either has, or soon attains the spirit of the whole body. Never was it known, that an *aristocracy*, which was haughty and tyrannical in one century, became easy and mild in the next. In effect, the yoke of this species of government is so galling, that whenever the people have got the least power, they have shaken it off with the utmost indignation, and established a popular form. And when they have not had strength enough to support themselves, they have thrown themselves into the arms of *despotism*, as the more eligible of the two evils. This latter was the case of Denmark, who sought a refuge from the oppression of its nobility, in the strong hold of arbitrary power. Poland has at present the name of republic, and it is one of the *aristocratic* form; but it is well known, that the little-finger of this government, is heavier than the loins of arbitrary power in most nations. The people are not only politically, but personally slaves, and treated with the utmost indignity. The republic of Venice is somewhat more moderate; yet even here, so heavy is the *aristocratic* yoke, that the nobles have been obliged to enervate the spirit of their subjects by every sort of debauchery; they have denied them the liberty of reason, and they have made them amends, by what a base soul will think a more valuable liberty, by not only allowing, but encouraging them to corrupt themselves in the most scandalous manner. They consider their subjects, as the farmer does the hog he keeps to feast upon. He holds him fast in his stye, but allows him to wallow as much as he pleases in his beloved filth and gluttony. So scandalously debauched a people as that of Venice, is to be met with no where else. High, low, men, women, clergy, and laity, are all alike. The ruling nobility are no less afraid of one another, than they are of the people; and for that reason, politically enervate their own body by the same effeminate luxury, by which they corrupt their subjects. They are impoverished by every means which can be invented; and they are kept in a perpetual terrour by the horrours of a state-inquisition. Here you see a people deprived of all rational freedom, and tyrannized over by about two thousand men; and yet this body of two thousand, are so far from enjoying any liberty by the subjection of the rest, that they are in an infinitely severer state of slavery; they make themselves the most degenerate and unhappy of mankind, for no other purpose than that they may the more effectually contribute to the misery of a whole nation. In short, the regular and methodical proceedings of an *aristocracy*, are more intolerable than the very excesses of a *despotism*, and in general, much further from any remedy.

Thus, my Lord, we have pursued *aristocracy* through its whole progress; we have seen the seeds, the growth, and the fruit. It could boast none of the advantages of a *despotism*, miserable as those advantages were, and it was overloaded with an exuberance of mischiefs, unknown even to *despotism* itself. In effect, it is no more than a disorderly tyranny. This form therefore could be little approved, even in speculation, by those who were capable of thinking, and could be less borne in practice by any who were capable of feeling. However, the fruitful policy of man was not yet exhausted. He had yet another farthing-candle to supply the deficiencies of the sun. This was the third form, known by political writers under the name of *democracy*. Here the people transacted all public business, or the greater part of it, in their own persons: their laws were made by themselves, and upon any failure of duty, their officers were accountable to themselves, and to them only. In all appearance, they had secured by this method the advantages of order and good government, without paying their liberty for the purchase. Now, my Lord, we are come to the master-piece of Grecian refinement, and Roman solidity, a popular government. The earliest and most celebrated republic of this model, was that of Athens. It was constructed by no less an artist, than the celebrated poet and philosopher, Solon. But no sooner was this political vessel launched from the stocks, than it overset, even in the life-time of the builder. A tyranny immediately supervened; not by a foreign conquest,

not by accident, but by the very nature and constitution of a *democracy*. An artful man became popular, the people had power in their hands, and they devolved a considerable share of their power upon their favourite; and the only use he made of this power, was to plunge those who gave it into slavery. Accident restored their liberty, and the same good fortune produced men of uncommon abilities and uncommon virtues among them. But these abilities were suffered to be of little service either to their possessors or to the state. Some of these men, for whose sakes alone we read their history, they banished; others they imprisoned; and all they treated with various circumstances of the most shameful ingratitude. Republics have many things in the spirit of absolute monarchy, but none more than this; a shining merit is ever hated or suspected in a popular assembly, as well as in a court; and all services done the state, are looked upon as dangerous to the rulers, whether sultans or senators. The *Ostracism* at Athens was built upon this principle. The giddy people, whom we have now under consideration, being elated with some flashes of success, which they owed to nothing less than any merit of their own, began to tyrannize over their equals, who had associated with them for their common defence. With their prudence they renounced all appearance of justice. They entered into wars rashly and wantonly. If they were unsuccessful, instead of growing wiser by their misfortune, they threw the whole blame of their own misconduct on the ministers who had advised, and the generals who had conducted those wars; until by degrees they had cut off all who could serve them in their councils or their battles. If at any time these wars had an happy issue, it was no less difficult to deal with them on account of their pride and insolence. Furious in their adversity, tyrannical in their successes, a commander had more trouble to concert his defence before the people, than to plan the operations of the campaign. It was not uncommon for a general, under the horrid *despotism* of the Roman emperors, to be ill received in proportion to the greatness of his services. Agricola is a strong instance of this. No man had done greater things, nor with more honest ambition. Yet on his return to court, he was obliged to enter Rome with all the secrecy of a criminal. He went to the palace, not like a victorious commander who had merited and might demand the greatest rewards, but like an offender who had come to supplicate a pardon for his crimes. His reception was answerable: "*Brevi osculo, et nullo sermone exceptus, turbæ servientium immistus est.*" Yet in that worst season of this worst of monarchical* tyrannies, modesty, discretion, and a coolness of temper, formed some kind of security even for the highest merit. But at Athens, the nicest and best studied behaviour was not a sufficient guard for a man of great capacity. Some of their bravest commanders were obliged to fly their country, some to enter into the service of its enemies, rather than abide a popular determination on their conduct, lest, as one of them said, their giddiness might make the people condemn where they meant to acquit; to throw in a black bean even when they intended a white one.

The Athenians made a very rapid progress to the most enormous excesses. The people under no restraint soon grew dissolute, luxurious, and idle. They renounced all labour, and began to subsist themselves from the public revenues. They lost all concern for their common honour or safety, and could bear no advice that tended to reform them. At this time truth became offensive to those lords the people, and most highly dangerous to the speaker. The orators no longer ascended the *rostrum*, but to corrupt them further with the most fulsome adulation. These orators were all bribed by foreign princes on the one side or the other. And besides its own parties, in this city there were parties, and avowed ones too, for the Persians, Spartans, and Macedonians, supported each of them by one or more demagogues pensioned and bribed to this iniquitous service. The people, forgetful of all virtue and public spirit, and intoxicated with the flatteries of their orators (these courtiers of republics, and endowed with the distinguishing characteristics of all other courtiers) this people, I say, at last arrived at that pitch of madness, that they coolly and deliberately, by an express law, made it capital for any man to propose an application of the immense sums squandered in public shows, even to the most necessary purposes of the state. When you see the people of this republic banishing and murdering their best and ablest citizens, dissipating the public treasure with the most senseless extravagance, and spending their whole time, as spectators or actors, in playing, fiddling, dancing and singing, does it not, my Lord, strike your imagination with the image of a sort of complex Nero? And does it not strike you with the greater horrour, when you observe,

* Sciant quibus moris illicita mirari, posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros, &c. See 42 to the end of it.

not one man only, but a whole city, grown drunk with pride and power, running with a rage of folly into the same mean and senseless debauchery and extravagance? But if this people resembled Nero in their extravagance, much more did they resemble and even exceed him in cruelty and injustice. In the time of Pericles, one of the most celebrated times in the history of that commonwealth, a King of Egypt sent them a donation of corn. This they were mean enough to accept. And had the Egyptian prince intended the ruin of this city of wicked bedlamites, he could not have taken a more effectual method to do it, than by such an ensnaring largess. The distribution of this bounty caused a quarrel; the majority set on foot an enquiry into the title of the citizens; and upon a vain pretence of illegitimacy, newly and occasionally set up, they deprived of their share of the royal donation no less than five thousand of their own body. They went further; they disfranchised them; and having once begun with an act of injustice, they could set no bounds to it. Not content with cutting them off from the rights of citizens, they plundered these unfortunate wretches of all their substance; and to crown this master-piece of violence and tyranny, they actually sold every man of the five thousand as slaves in the public market. Observe, my Lord, that the five thousand we here speak of, were cut off from a body of no more than nineteen thousand; for the entire number of citizens was no greater at that time. Could the tyrant who wished the Roman people but one neck; could the tyrant Caligula himself have done, nay, he could scarcely wish for, a greater mischief, than to have cut off, at one stroke, a fourth of his people? Or has the cruelty of that series of sanguine tyrants, the Cæsars, ever presented such a piece of flagrant and extensive wickedness? The whole history of this celebrated republic is but one tissue of rashness, folly, ingratitude, injustice, tumult, violence, and tyranny, and indeed of every species of wickedness that can well be imagined. This was a city of wise men, in which a minister could not exercise his functions; a warlike people, among whom a general did not dare either to gain or lose a battle; a learned nation in which a philosopher could not venture on a free enquiry. This was the city which banished Themistocles, starved Aristides, forced into exile Miltiades, drove out Anaxagoras, and poisoned Socrates. This was a city which changed the form of its government with the moon; eternal conspiracies, revolutions daily, nothing fixed and established

A republic, as an ancient philosopher has observed, is no one species of government, but a magazine of every species; here you find every sort of it, and that in the worst form. As there is a perpetual change, one rising and the other falling, you have all the violence and wicked policy, by which a beginning power must always acquire its strength, and all the weakness by which falling states are brought to a complete destruction. Rome has a more venerable aspect than Athens; and she conducted her affairs, so far as related to the ruin and oppression of the greatest part of the world, with greater wisdom and more uniformity. But the domestic œconomy of these two states was nearly or altogether the same. An internal dissension constantly tore to pieces the bowels of the Roman commonwealth. You find the same confusion, the same factions, which subsisted at Athens, the same tumults, the same revolutions, and in fine, the same slavery; if perhaps their former condition did not deserve that name altogether as well. All other republics were of the same character. Florence was a transcript of Athens. And the modern republics, as they approach more or less to the democratic form, partake more or less of the nature of those which I have described.

We are now at the close of our review of the three simple forms of artificial society, and we have shewn them, however they may differ in name, or in some slight circumstances, to be all alike in effect; in effect, to be all tyrannies. But suppose we were inclined to make the most ample concessions; let us concede Athens, Rome, Carthage, and two or three more of the ancient, and as many of the modern commonwealths, to have been, or to be, free and happy, and to owe their freedom and happiness to their political constitution. Yet allowing all this, what defence does this make for artificial society in general, that these inconsiderable spots of the globe have for some short space of time stood as exceptions to a charge so general? But when we call these governments free, or concede that their citizens were happier than those which lived under different forms, it is merely *ex abundanti*. For we should be greatly mistaken, if we really thought that the majority of the people which filled these cities, enjoyed even that nominal political freedom of which I have spoken so much already. In reality, they had no part of it. In Athens there were usually from ten to thirty thousand freemen: this was the utmost. But the slaves usually amounted to four hundred thousand, and sometimes to a great many more. The freemen of Sparta and Rome

were not more numerous in proportion to those whom they held in a slavery, even more terrible than the Athenian. Therefore state the matter fairly: the free states never formed, though they were taken altogether, the thousandth part of the habitable globe; the freemen in these states were never the twentieth part of the people, and the time they subsisted is scarce any thing in that immense ocean of duration in which time and slavery are so nearly commensurate. Therefore call these free states, or popular governments, or what you please; when we consider the majority of their inhabitants, and regard the natural rights of mankind, they must appear in reality and truth, no better than pitiful and oppressive oligarchies.

After so fair an examen, wherein nothing has been exaggerated; no fact produced which cannot be proved, and none which has been produced in any wise forced or strained, while thousands have, for brevity, been omitted; after so candid a discussion in all respects; what slave so passive, what bigot so blind, what enthusiast so headlong, what politician so hardened, as to stand up in defence of a system calculated for a curse to mankind? a curse under which they smart and groan to this hour, without thoroughly knowing the nature of the disease, and wanting understanding or courage to supply the remedy.

I need not excuse myself to your Lordship, nor, I think, to any honest man, for the zeal I have shewn in this cause; for it is an honest zeal, and in a good cause. I have defended natural religion against a confederacy of atheists and divines. I now plead for natural society against politicians, and for natural reason against all three. When the world is in a fitter temper than it is at present to hear truth, or when I shall be more indifferent about its temper; my thoughts may become more public. In the mean time, let them repose in my own bosom, and in the bosoms of such men as are fit to be initiated in the sober mysteries of truth and reason. My antagonists have already done as much as I could desire. Parties in religion and politics make sufficient discoveries concerning each other, to give a sober man a proper caution against them all. The monarchic, and aristocratical, and popular partisans have been jointly laying their axes to the root of all government, and have in their turns proved each other absurd and inconvenient. In vain you tell me that artificial government is good, but that I fall out only with the abuse. The thing! the thing itself is the abuse! Observe, my Lord, I pray you, that grand errour upon which all artificial legislative power is founded. It was observed, that men had ungovernable passions, which made it necessary to guard against the violence they might offer to each other. They appointed governours over them for this reason! but a worse and more perplexing difficulty arises, how to be defended against the governours? *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* In vain they change from a single person to a few. These few have the passions of the one, and they unite to strengthen themselves, and secure the gratification of their lawless passions at the expense of the general good. In vain do we fly to the many. The case is worse; their passions are less under the government of reason, they are augmented by the contagion, and defended against all attacks by their multitude.

I have purposely avoided the mention of the mixed form of government, for reasons that will be very obvious to your Lordship. But my caution can avail me but little. You will not fail to urge it against me in favour of political society. You will not fail to shew how the errours of the several simple modes are corrected by a mixture of all of them, and a proper balance of the several powers in such a state. I confess, my Lord, that this has been long a darling mistake of my own; and that of all the sacrifices I have made to truth, this has been by far the greatest. When I confess that I think this notion a mistake, I know to whom I am speaking, for I am satisfied that reasons are like liquors, and there are some of such a nature as none but strong heads can bear. There are few with whom I can communicate so freely as with Pope. But Pope cannot bear every truth. He has a timidity which hinders the full exertion of his faculties, almost as effectually as bigotry cramps those of the general herd of mankind. But whoever is a genuine follower of truth, keeps his eye steady upon his guide, indifferent whither he is led, provided that she is the leader. And, my Lord, if it be properly considered, it were infinitely better to remain possessed by the whole legion of vulgar mistakes, than to reject some, and at the same time to retain a fondness for others altogether as absurd and irrational. The first has at least a consistency, that makes a man, however erroneously, uniform at least; but the latter way of proceeding is such an inconsistent chimera and jumble of philosophy, and vulgar prejudice, that hardly any thing more ridiculous can be conceived. Let us therefore freely, and without fear or prejudice, examine this last contrivance of policy. And without considering how near the quick our

instruments may come, let us search it to the bottom.

First then, all men are agreed that this junction of regal, aristocratic, and popular power, must form a very complex, nice, and intricate machine, which being composed of such a variety of parts, with such opposite tendencies and movements, it must be liable on every accident to be disordered. To speak without metaphor, such a government must be liable to frequent cabals, tumults, and revolutions, from its very constitution. These are undoubtedly as ill effects as can happen in a society; for in such a case, the closeness acquired by community, instead of serving for mutual defence, serves only to increase the danger. Such a system is like a city, where trades that require constant fires are much exercised, where the houses are built of combustible materials, and where they stand extremely close.

In the second place, the several constituent parts having their distinct rights, and these many of them so necessary to be determined with exactness, are yet so indeterminate in their nature, that it becomes a new and constant source of debate and confusion. Hence it is, that whilst the business of government should be carrying on, the question is, Who has a right to exercise this or that function of it, or what men have power to keep their offices in any function? Whilst this contest continues, and whilst the balance in any sort continues, it has never any remission; all manner of abuses and villanies in officers remain unpunished; the greatest frauds and robberies in the public revenues are committed in defiance of justice; and abuses grow, by time and impunity, into customs; until they prescribe against the laws, and grow too inveterate often to admit a cure, unless such as may be as bad as the disease.

Thirdly, the several parts of this species of government, though united, preserve the spirit which each form has separately. Kings are ambitious; the nobility haughty; and the populace tumultuous and ungovernable. Each party, however, in appearance peaceable, carries on a design upon the others; and it is owing to this, that in all questions, whether concerning foreign or domestic affairs, the whole generally turns more upon some party-matter than upon the nature of the thing itself; whether such a step will diminish or augment the power of the crown, or how far the privileges of the subject are like to be extended or restricted by it. And these questions are constantly resolved, without any consideration of the merits of the cause, merely as the parties who uphold these jarring interests may chance to prevail; and as they prevail, the balance is overset, now upon one side, now upon the other. The government is one day, arbitrary power in a single person; another, a juggling confederacy of a few to cheat the prince and enslave the people; and the third, a frantic and unmanageable democracy. The great instrument of all these changes, and what infuses a peculiar venom into all of them, is party. It is of no consequence what the principles of any party, or what their pretensions are; the spirit which actuates all parties is the same; the spirit of ambition, of self-interest, of oppression, and treachery. This spirit entirely reverses all the principles which a benevolent nature has erected within us; all honesty, all equal justice, and even the ties of natural society, the natural affections. In a word, my Lord, we have all *seen*, and if any outward considerations were worthy the lasting concern of a wise man, we have some of us *felt*, such oppression from party government as no other tyranny can parallel. We behold daily the most important rights, rights upon which all the others depend, we behold these rights determined in the last resort, without the least attention even to the appearance or colour of justice; we behold this without emotion, because we have grown up in the constant view of such practices; and we are not surprised to hear a man requested to be a knave and a traitor, with as much indifference as if the most ordinary favour were asked; and we hear this request refused, not because it is a most unjust and unreasonable desire, but that this worthy has already engaged his injustice to another. These and many more points I am far from spreading to their full extent. You are sensible that I do not put forth half my strength; and you cannot be at a loss for the reason. A man is allowed sufficient freedom of thought, provided he knows how to choose his subject properly. You may criticise freely upon the Chinese constitution, and observe with as much severity as you please upon the absurd tricks, or destructive bigotry of the bonzees. But the scene is changed as you come homeward, and atheism or treason may be the names given in Britain, to what would be reason and truth if asserted of China. I submit to the condition, and though I have a notorious advantage before me, I wave the pursuit. For else, my Lord, it is very obvious what a picture might be drawn of the excesses of party even in our own nation. I could shew, that the same faction has in one reign promoted popular seditions, and in the next been a patron of tyranny; I could shew,

that they have all of them betrayed the public safety at all times, and have very frequently with equal perfidy made a market of their own cause, and their own associates. I could shew how vehemently they have contended for names, and how silently they have passed over things of the last importance. And I could demonstrate, that they have had the opportunity of doing all this mischief, nay, that they themselves had their origin and growth from that complex form of government, which we are wisely taught to look upon as so great a blessing. Revolve, my Lord, our history from the conquest. We scarce ever had a prince, who by fraud, or violence, had not made some infringement on the constitution. We scarce ever had a parliament which knew, when it attempted to set limits to the royal authority, how to set limits to its own. Evils we have had continually calling for reformation, and reformations more grievous than any evils. Our boasted liberty sometimes trodden down, sometimes giddily set up, and ever precariously fluctuating and unsettled; it has only been kept alive by the blasts of continual feuds, wars, and conspiracies. In no country in Europe has the scaffold so often blushed with the blood of its nobility. Confiscations, banishments, attainders, executions, make a large part of the history of such of our families as are not utterly extinguished by them. Formerly indeed things had a more ferocious appearance than they have at this day. In these early and unrefined ages, the jarring parts of a certain chaotic constitution supported their several pretensions by the sword. Experience and policy have since taught other methods.

At nunc res agitur tenui pulmone rubeta.

But how far corruption, venality, the contempt of honour, the oblivion of all duty to our country, and the most abandoned public prostitution, are preferable to the more glaring and violent effects of faction, I will not presume to determine. Sure I am that they are very great evils.

I have done with the forms of government. During the course of my enquiry you may have observed a very material difference between my manner of reasoning and that which is in use amongst the abettors of artificial society. They form their plans upon what seems most eligible to their imaginations, for the ordering of mankind. I discover the mistakes in those plans, from the real known consequences which have resulted from them. They have inlisted reason to fight against itself, and employ its whole force to prove that it is an insufficient guide to them in the conduct of their lives. But unhappily for us, in proportion as we have deviated from the plain rule of our nature, and turned our reason against itself, in that proportion have we increased the follies and miseries of mankind. The more deeply we penetrate into the labyrinth of art, the further we find ourselves from those ends for which we entered it. This has happened in almost every species of artificial society, and in all times. We found, or we thought we found, an inconvenience in having every man the judge of his own cause. Therefore judges were set up, at first with discretionary powers. But it was soon found a miserable slavery to have our lives and properties precarious, and hanging upon the arbitrary determination of any one man, or set of men. We flew to laws as a remedy for this evil. By these we persuaded ourselves we might know with some certainty upon what ground we stood. But lo! differences arose upon the sense and interpretation of these laws. Thus we were brought back to our old incertitude. New laws were made to expound the old; and new difficulties arose upon the new laws; as words multiplied, opportunities of cavilling upon them multiplied also. Then recourse was had to notes, comments, glosses, reports, *responsa prudentum*, learned readings: eagle stood against eagle: authority was set up against authority. Some were allured by the modern, others reverenced the antient. The new were more enlightened, the old were more venerable. Some adopted the comment, others stuck to the text. The confusion increased, the mist thickened, until it could be discovered no longer what was allowed or forbidden, what things were in property, and what common. In this uncertainty, (uncertain even to the professors, an Egyptian darkness to the rest of mankind,) the contending parties felt themselves more effectually ruined by the delay than they could have been by the injustice of any decision. Our inheritances are become a prize for disputation; and disputes and litigations are become an inheritance.

The professors of artificial law have always walked hand in hand with the professors of artificial theology. As their end, in confounding the reason of man, and abridging his natural freedom, is exactly the same, they have adjusted the means to that end in a way entirely similar. The divine thunders out his *anathemas* with more noise and terrour against the breach of one of his positive institutions, or the neglect of some of his trivial forms, than against the neglect or breach of those duties and commandments of natural religion, which by these forms and institutions he pretends to enforce. The

lawyer has his forms, and his positive institutions too, and he adheres to them with a veneration altogether as religious. The worst cause cannot be so prejudicial to the litigant, as his advocate's or attorney's ignorance or neglect of these forms. A law-suit is like an ill-managed dispute, in which the first object is soon out of sight, and the parties end upon a matter wholly foreign to that on which they began. In a law-suit the question is, who has a right to a certain house or farm? And this question is daily determined, not upon the evidence of the right, but upon the observance or neglect of some forms of words in use with the gentlemen of the robe, about which there is even among themselves such a disagreement, that the most experienced veterans in the profession can never be positively assured that they are not mistaken.

Let us expostulate with these learned sages, these priests of the sacred temple of justice. Are we judges of our own property? By no means. You then, who are initiated into the mysteries of the blindfold goddess, inform me whether I have a right to eat the bread I have earned by the hazard of my life, or the sweat of my brow? The grave doctor answers me in the affirmative; the reverend serjeant replies in the negative; the learned barrister reasons upon one side and upon the other, and concludes nothing. What shall I do? An antagonist starts up and presses me hard. I enter the field, and retain these three persons to defend my cause. My cause, which two farmers from the plough could have decided in half an hour, takes the court twenty years. I am however at the end of my labour, and have in reward for all my toil and vexation, a judgment in my favour. But hold—a sagacious commander in the adversary's army, has found a flaw in the proceeding. My triumph is turned into mourning. I have used *or*, instead of *and*, or some mistake, small in appearance, but dreadful in its consequences, and have the whole of my success quashed in a writ of errour. I remove my suit; I shift from court to court; I fly from equity to law, and from law to equity; equal uncertainty attends me every where; and a mistake in which I had no share, decides at once upon my liberty and property, sending me from the court to a prison, and adjudging my family to beggary and famine. I am innocent, gentlemen, of the darkness and uncertainty of your science. I never darkened it with absurd and contradictory notions, nor confounded it with chicane and sophistry. You have excluded me from any share in the conduct of my own cause; the science was too deep for me; I acknowledged it; but it was too deep even for yourselves: you have made the way so intricate, that you are yourselves lost in it; you err, and you punish me for your errours.

The delay of the law is, your Lordship will tell me, a trite topic, and which of its abuses have not been too severely felt not to be complained of? A man's property is to serve for the purposes of his support; and therefore to delay a determination concerning that, is the worst injustice, because it cuts off the very end and purpose for which I applied to the judicature for relief. Quite contrary in the case of a man's life; there the determination can hardly be too much protracted. Mistakes in this case are as often fallen into as many other, and if the judgment is sudden, the mistakes are the most irretrievable of all others. Of this the gentlemen of the robe are themselves sensible, and they have brought it into a maxim. *De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa.* But what could have induced them to reverse the rules, and to contradict that reason which dictated them, I am utterly unable to guess. A point concerning property, which ought, for the reasons I just mentioned, to be most speedily decided, frequently exercises the wit of successions of lawyers, for many generations. *Multa virûm volvens durando sæcula vincit.* But the question concerning a man's life, that great question in which no delay ought to be counted tedious, is commonly determined in twenty-four hours at the utmost. It is not to be wondered at, that injustice and absurdity should be inseparable companions.

Ask of politicians the end for which laws were originally designed; and they will answer, that the laws were designed as a protection for the poor and weak, against the oppression of the rich and powerful. But surely no pretence can be so ridiculous; a man might as well tell me he has taken off my load, because he has changed the burden. If the poor man is not able to support his suit, according to the vexatious and expensive manner established in civilized countries, has not the rich as great an advantage over him as the strong has over the weak in a state of nature? But we will not place the state of nature, which is the reign of God, in competition with political society, which is the absurd usurpation of man. In a state of nature, it is true, that a man of superiour force may beat or rob me; but then it is true, that I am at full liberty to defend myself, or make reprisal by surprise, or by cunning, or by any other way in which I may be superior to him. But in political society, a rich man

may rob me in another way. I cannot defend myself; for money is the only weapon with which we are allowed to fight. And if I attempt to avenge myself, the whole force of that society is ready to complete my ruin.

A good person once said, that where mystery begins, religion ends. Cannot I say, as truly at least of human laws, that where mystery begins, justice ends? It is hard to say, whether the doctors of law or divinity have made the greater advances in the lucrative business of mystery. The lawyers, as well as the theologians, have erected another reason besides natural reason; and the result has been, another justice besides natural justice. They have so bewildered the world and themselves in unmeaning forms and ceremonies, and so perplexed the plainest matters with metaphysical jargon, that it carries the highest danger to a man out of that profession, to make the least step without their advice and assistance. Thus by confining to themselves the knowledge of the foundation of all men's lives and properties, they have reduced all mankind into the most abject and servile dependence. We are tenants at the will of these gentlemen for every thing; and a metaphysical quibble is to decide whether the greatest villain breathing shall meet his deserts, or escape with impunity, or whether the best man in the society shall not be reduced to the lowest and most despicable condition it affords. In a word, my Lord, the injustice, delay, puerility, false refinement, and affected mystery of the law are such, that many who live under it come to admire and envy the expedition, simplicity, and equality of arbitrary judgments. I need insist the less on this article to your Lordship, as you have frequently lamented the miseries derived to us from artificial law, and your candour is the more to be admired and applauded in this, as your Lordship's noble house has derived its wealth and its honour from that profession.

Before we finish our examination of artificial society, I shall lead your Lordship into a closer consideration of the relations which it gives birth to, and the benefits, if such they are, which result from these relations. The most obvious division of society is into rich and poor; and it is no less obvious, that the number of the former bear a great disproportion to those of the latter. The whole business of the poor is to administer to the idleness, folly, and luxury of the rich; and that of the rich, in return, is to find the best methods of confirming the slavery and increasing the burdens of the poor. In a state of nature, it is an invariable law, that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labours. In a state of artificial society, it is a law as constant and as invariable, that those who labour most, enjoy the fewest things; and that those who labour not at all, have the greatest number of enjoyments. A constitution of things this, strange and ridiculous beyond expression. We scarce believe a thing when we are told it, which we actually see before our eyes every day without being in the least surprised. I suppose that there are in Great Britain upwards of an hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. An hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our just indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment! This is an instance, I could not wish a stronger, of the numberless things which we pass by in their common dress, yet which shock us when they are nakedly represented. But this number, considerable as it is, and the slavery, with all its baseness and horrour, which we have at home, is nothing to what the rest of the world affords of the same nature. Millions daily bathed in the poisonous damps and destructive effluvia of lead, silver, copper, and arsenic. To say nothing of those other employments, those stations of wretchedness and contempt, in which civil society has placed the numerous *enfans perdus* of her army. Would any rational man submit to one of the most tolerable of these drudgeries, for all the artificial enjoyments which policy has made to result from them? By no means. And yet need I suggest to your Lordship, that those who find the means, and those who arrive at the end, are not at all the same persons. On considering the strange and unaccountable fancies and contrivances of artificial reason, I have somewhere called this earth the Bedlam of our system. Looking now upon the effects of some of those fancies, may we not with equal reason call it likewise the Newgate and the Bridewell of the universe?

Indeed the blindness of one part of mankind co-operating with the phrenzy and villany of the other, has been the real builder of this respectable fabric of political society: and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery, in return their state of slavery is made a pretence for continuing them in a state of blindness; for the politician will tell you gravely, that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but too true; and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions.

In a misery of this sort, admitting some few lenitives, and those too but a few, nine parts in ten of the whole race of mankind drudge through life. It may be urged perhaps, in palliation of this, that, at least, the rich few find a considerable and real benefit from the wretchedness of the many. But is this so in fact? Let us examine the point with a little more attention. For this purpose the rich in all societies may be thrown into two classes. The first is of those who are powerful as well as rich, and conduct the operations of the vast political machine. The other is of those who employ their riches wholly in the acquisition of pleasure. As to the first sort, their continual care and anxiety, their toilsome days, and sleepless nights, are next to proverbial. These circumstances are sufficient almost to level their condition to that of the unhappy majority; but there are other circumstances which place them in a far lower condition. Not only their understandings labour continually, which is the severest labour, but their hearts are torn by the worst, most troublesome, and insatiable of all passions, by avarice, by ambition, by fear and jealousy. No part of the mind has rest. Power gradually extirpates from the mind every humane and gentle virtue. Pity, benevolence, friendship are things almost unknown in high stations. *Veræ amicitiæ rarissime inveniuntur in iis qui in honoribus reque publica versantur*, says Cicero. And indeed, courts are the schools where cruelty, pride, dissimulation and treachery are studied and taught in the most vicious perfection. This is a point so clear and acknowledged, that if it did not make a necessary part of my subject, I should pass it by entirely. And this has hindered me from drawing at full length, and in the most striking colours, this shocking picture of the degeneracy and wretchedness of human nature, in that part which is vulgarly thought its happiest and most amiable state. You know from what originals I could copy such pictures. Happy are they who know enough of them to know the little value of the possessors of such things, and of all that they possess; and happy they who have been snatched from that post of danger which they occupy, with the remains of their virtue; loss of honours, wealth, titles, and even the loss of one's country, is nothing in balance with so great an advantage.

Let us now view the other species of the rich, those who devote their time and fortunes to idleness and pleasure. How much happier are they? The pleasures which are agreeable to nature are within the reach of all, and therefore can form no distinction in favour of the rich. The pleasures which art forces up are seldom sincere, and never satisfying. What is worse, this constant application to pleasure takes away from the enjoyment, or rather turns it into the nature of a very burdensome and laborious business. It has consequences much more fatal. It produces a weak valetudinary state of body, attended by all those horrid disorders, and yet more horrid methods of cure, which are the result of luxury on one hand, and the weak and ridiculous efforts of human art on the other. The pleasures of such men are scarcely felt as pleasures; at the same time that they bring on pains and diseases, which are felt but too severely. The mind has its share of the misfortune; it grows lazy and enervate, unwilling and unable to search for truth, and utterly uncapable of knowing, much less of relishing real happiness. The poor by their excessive labour, and the rich by their enormous luxury, are set upon a level, and rendered equally ignorant of any knowledge which might conduce to their happiness. A dismal view of the interior of all civil society! The lower part broken and ground down by the most cruel oppression; and the rich by their artificial method of life bringing worse evils on themselves, than their tyranny could possibly inflict on those below them. Very different is the prospect of the natural state. Here there are no wants which nature gives, and in this state men can be sensible of no other wants, which are not to be supplied by a very moderate degree of labour; therefore there is no slavery. Neither is there any luxury, because no single man can supply the materials of it. Life is simple, and therefore it is happy.

I am conscious, my Lord, that your politician will urge in his defence, that this unequal state is highly useful. That without dooming some part of mankind to extraordinary toil, the arts which cultivate life could not be exercised. But I demand of this politician, how such arts

cause to be necessary? He answers, that civil society could not well exist without them. So that these arts are necessary to civil society, and civil society necessary again to these arts. Thus are we running in a circle, without modesty, and without end, and making one errour and extravagance an excuse for the other. My sentiments about these arts and their cause, I have often discoursed with my friends at large. Pope has expressed them in good verse, where he talks with so much force of reason and elegance of language, in praise of the state of nature:

Then was not pride, nor arts that pride to aid,
Man walk'd with beast, joint-tenant of the shade.

On the whole, my Lord, if political society, in whatever form, has still made the many the property of the few; if it has introduced labours unnecessary, vices and diseases unknown, and pleasures incompatible with nature; if in all countries it abridges the lives of millions, and renders those of millions more utterly abject and miserable, shall we still worship so destructive an idol, and daily sacrifice to it our health, our liberty, and our peace? Or shall we pass by this monstrous heap of absurd notions, and abominable practices, thinking we have sufficiently discharged our duty in exposing the trifling cheats, and ridiculous juggles of a few mad, designing, or ambitious priests? Alas! my Lord, we labour under a mortal consumption, whilst we are so anxious about the cure of a sore finger. For has not this leviathan of civil power overflowed the earth with a deluge of blood, as if he were made to disport and play therein? We have shewn, that political society, on a moderate calculation, has been the means of murdering several times the number of inhabitants now upon the earth, during its short existence, not upwards of four thousand years in any accounts to be depended on. But we have said nothing of the other, and perhaps as bad consequence of these wars, which have spilled such seas of blood, and reduced so many millions to a merciless slavery. But these are only the ceremonies performed in the porch of the political temple. Much more horrid ones are seen as you enter it. The several species of government vie with each other in the absurdity of their constitutions, and the oppression which they make their subjects endure. Take them under what form you please, they are in effect but a despotism, and they fall, both in effect and appearance too, after a very short period, into that cruel and detestable species of tyranny; which I rather call it, because we have been educated under another form, than that this is of worse consequences to mankind. For the free governments, for the point of their space, and the moment of their duration, have felt more confusion, and committed more flagrant acts of tyranny, than the most perfect despotic governments which we have ever known. Turn your eye next to the labyrinth of the law, and the iniquity conceived in its intricate recesses. Consider the ravages committed in the bowels of all commonwealths by ambition, by avarice, envy, fraud, open injustice, and pretended friendship; vices which could draw little support from a state of nature, but which blossom and flourish in the rankness of political society. Revolve our whole discourse; add to it all those reflections which your own good understanding shall suggest, and make a strenuous effort beyond the reach of vulgar philosophy, to confess that the cause of artificial society is more defenceless even than that of artificial religion; that it is as derogatory from the honour of the Creator, as subversive of human reason, and productive of infinitely more mischief to the human race.

If pretended revelations have caused wars where they were opposed, and slavery where they were received, the pretended wise inventions of politicians have done the same. But the slavery has been much heavier, the wars far more bloody, and both more universal by many degrees. Shew me any mischief produced by the madness or wickedness of theologians, and I will shew you an hundred, resulting from the ambition and villany of conquerors and statesmen. Shew me an absurdity in religion, and I will undertake to shew you an hundred for one in political laws and institutions. If you say, that natural religion is a sufficient guide without the foreign aid of revelation, on what principle should political laws become necessary? Is not the same reason available in theology and in politics? If the laws of nature are the laws of God, is it consistent with the divine wisdom to prescribe rules to us, and leave the enforcement of them to the folly of human institutions? Will you follow truth but to a certain point?

We are indebted for all our miseries to our distrust of that guide, which Providence thought sufficient for our condition, our own natural reason, which rejecting both in human and divine things, we have given our necks to the yoke of political and theological slavery. We have renounced the prerogative of man, and it is no wonder that we should be treated like beasts. But our misery is much greater than theirs, as the crime we commit in reject-

ing the lawful dominion of our reason is greater than any which they can commit. If after all, you should confess all these things, yet plead the necessity of political institutions, weak and wicked as they are, I can argue with equal, perhaps superiour force concerning the necessity of artificial religion; and every step you advance in your argument, you add a strength to mine. So that if we are resolved to submit our reason and our liberty to civil usurpation, we have nothing to do but to conform as quietly as we can to the vulgar notions which are connected with this, and take up the theology of the vulgar as well as their politics. But if we think this necessity rather imaginary than real, we should renounce their dreams of society, together with their visions of religion, and vindicate ourselves into perfect liberty.

You are, my Lord, but just entering into the world; I am going out of it. I have played long enough to be heartily tired of the drama. Whether I have acted my part in it well or ill, posterity will judge with more candour than I, or than the present age, with our present passions, can possibly pretend to. For my part, I quit it without a sigh, and submit to the sovereign order without murmuring. The nearer we approach to the goal of life, the better we begin to understand the true value of our existence, and the real weight of our opinions. We set out much in love with both; but we leave much behind us as we advance. We first throw away the tales along with the rattles of our nurses; those of the priest keep their hold a little longer; those of our governours the longest of all. But the passions which prop these opinions are withdrawn one after another; and the cool light of reason at the setting of our life, shews us what a false splendour played upon these objects during our more sanguine seasons. Happy, my Lord, if instructed by my experience, and even by my errours, you come early to make such an estimate of things, as may give freedom and ease to your life. I am happy that such an estimate promises me comfort at my death.

A

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

INTO THE

ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

TASTE,

AND SEVERAL OTHER ADDITIONS.

PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavoured to make this edition something more full and satisfactory than the first. I have sought with the utmost care, and read with equal attention, every thing which has appeared in public against my opinions; I have taken advantage of the candid liberty of my friends; and if by these means I have been better enabled to discover the imperfections of the work, the indulgence it has received, imperfect as it was, furnished me with a new motive to spare no reasonable pains for its improvement. Though I have not found sufficient reason, or what appeared to me sufficient, for making any material change in my theory, I have found it necessary in many places to explain, illustrate, and enforce it. I have prefixed an introductory discourse concerning Taste: it is a matter curious in itself; and it leads naturally enough to the principal inquiry. This, with the other explanations, has made the work considerably larger; and by increasing its bulk has, I am afraid, added to its faults; so that, notwithstanding all my attention, it may stand in need of a yet greater share of indulgence than it required at its first appearance.

They who are accustomed to studies of this nature will expect, and they will allow too for many faults. They know that many of the objects of our inquiry are in themselves obscure and intricate; and that many others have been rendered so by affected refinements or false learning; they know that there are many impediments in the subject, in the prejudices of others, and even in our own, that render it a matter of no small difficulty to shew in a clear light the genuine face of nature. They know that whilst the mind is intent on the general scheme of things, some particular parts must be neglected; that we must often submit the style to the matter, and frequently give up the praise of elegance, satisfied with being clear.

The characters of nature are legible, it is true; but they are not plain enough to enable those who run, to read them. We must make use of a cautious, I had almost said, a timorous method of proceeding. We must not attempt to fly, when we can scarcely pretend to creep. In considering any complex matter, we ought to examine every distinct ingredient in the composition, one by one; and reduce every thing to the utmost simplicity; since the condition of our nature binds us to a strict law and very narrow limits. We ought afterwards to re-examine the principles by the effect of the composition, as well as the composition by that of the principles. We ought to compare our subject with things of a similar nature, and even with things of a contrary nature; for discoveries may be and often are made by the contrast, which would escape us on the single view. The greater number of the comparisons we make, the more general and the more certain our knowledge is like to prove, as built upon a more extensive and perfect induction.

If an inquiry thus carefully conducted, should fail at last of discovering the truth, it may answer an end perhaps as useful, in discovering to us the weakness of our own understanding. If it does not make us knowing, it may make us modest. If it does not preserve us from errour, it may at least from the spirit of errour; and may make us cautious of pronouncing with positiveness or with haste, when so much labour may end in so much uncertainty.

I could wish that in examining this theory, the same method were pursued which I endeavoured to observe in forming it. The objections, in my opinion, ought to be proposed, either to the several principles as they are distinctly considered, or to the justness of the conclusion which is drawn from them. But it is common to pass over both the premises and conclusion in silence, and to produce as an objection, some poetical passage which does not seem easily accounted for upon the principles I endeavour to establish. This manner of proceeding I should think very improper. The task would be infinite, if we could establish no principle until we had previously unravelled the complex texture of every image or description to be found in poets and orators. And though we should never be able to reconcile the effect of such images to our principles, this can never overturn the theory itself, whilst it is founded on certain and indisputable facts. A theory founded on experiment, and not assumed, is always good for so much as it explains. Our inability to push it indefinitely is no argument at all against it. This inability may be owing to our ignorance of some necessary *medium*; to a want of proper application; to many other causes besides a defect in the principles we

employ. In reality, the subject requires a much closer attention, than we dare claim from our manner of treating it.

If it should not appear on the face of the work, I must caution the reader against imagining that I intended a full dissertation on the Sublime and Beautiful. My inquiry went no farther than to the origin of these ideas. If the qualities which I have ranged under the head of the Sublime be all found consistent with each other, and all different from those which I place under the head of beauty; and if those which compose the class of the Beautiful have the same consistency with themselves, and the same opposition to those which are classed under the denomination of Sublime, I am in little pain whether any body chooses to follow the name I give them or not, provided he allows that what I dispose under different heads are in reality different things in nature. The use I make of the words may be blamed, as too confined or too extended; my meaning cannot well be misunderstood.

To conclude; whatever progress may be made towards the discovery of truth in this matter, I do not repent the pains I have taken in it. The use of such inquiries may be very considerable. Whatever turns the soul inward on itself, tends to concenter its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger flights of science. By looking into physical causes, our minds are opened and enlarged; and in this pursuit, whether we take or whether we lose our game, the chace is certainly of service. Cicero, true as he was to the academic philosophy, and consequently led to reject the certainty of physical, as of every other kind of knowledge, yet freely confesses its great importance to the human understanding; "*Est animorum ingeniorumque nostrorum naturale quod dam quasi pabulum consideratio contemplatioque naturæ.*" If we can direct the lights we derive from such exalted speculations, upon the humbler field of the imagination, whilst we investigate the springs, and trace the courses of our passions, we may not only communicate to the taste a sort of philosophical solidity, but we may reflect back on the severer sciences some of the graces and elegancies of taste, without which the greatest proficiency in those sciences will always have the appearance of something illiberal.

INTRODUCTION.

ON TASTE.

On a superficial view, we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures: but, notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of reason and taste is the same in all human creatures. For if there were not some principles of judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken either on their reason or their passions, sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears indeed to be generally acknowledged, that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixed. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards, which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature. But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which relate to taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aërial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, cannot be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled among the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science, and reduced those maxims into a system. If taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the labourers were few or negligent; for, to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one, which urge us to ascertain the other. And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters, their difference is not attended with the same important consequences; else I make no doubt but that the logic of taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And indeed, it is very necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as our present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if taste has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labour is like to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged an useless, if not an absurd undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies.

The term taste, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate; the thing which we understand by it, is far from a simple and determinate idea in the minds of most men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confusion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this disorder. For when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our inquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out.

——— Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex.

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way towards informing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it will, in the order of things, it seems rather to follow than to precede our inquiry, of which it ought to be considered as the result. It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason undoubtedly; but for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation, is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But to cut off all pretence for cavilling, I mean by the word Taste no more than that

faculty or those faculties of the mind, which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point in this inquiry is, to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of taste I fancy there are; however paradoxical it may seem to those, who on a superficial view imagine, that there is so great a diversity of tastes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers in man, which I know, that are conversant about external objects, are the senses; the imagination; and the judgment. And first with regard to the senses. We do and we must suppose, that as the conformation of their organs are nearly or altogether the same in all men, so the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the same, or with little difference. We are satisfied that what appears to be light to one eye, appears light to another; that what seems sweet to one palate, is sweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man, is likewise dark and bitter to that; and we conclude in the same manner of great and little, hard and soft, hot and cold, rough and smooth; and indeed of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we suffer ourselves to imagine, that their senses present to different men different images of things, this sceptical proceeding will make every sort of reasoning on every subject vain and frivolous, even that sceptical reasoning itself which had persuaded us to entertain a doubt concerning the agreement of our perceptions. But as there will be little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, it must necessarily be allowed, that the pleasures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it must raise in all mankind, whilst it operates, naturally, simply, and by its proper powers only; for if we deny this, we must imagine that the same cause operating in the same manner, and on subjects of the same kind, will produce different effects, which would be highly absurd. Let us first consider this point in the sense of taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter; and as they are all agreed in finding these qualities in those objects, they do not in the least differ concerning their effects with regard to pleasure and pain. They all concur in calling sweetness pleasant, and sourness and bitterness unpleasant. Here there is no diversity in their sentiments; and that there is not, appears fully from the consent of all men in the metaphors which are taken from the sense of taste. A sour temper, bitter expressions, bitter curses, a bitter fate, are terms well and strongly understood by all. And we are altogether as well understood when we say, a sweet disposition, a sweet person, a sweet condition, and the like. It is confessed, that custom and some other causes, have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last. A man frequently comes to prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar, and the flavour of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confusion in tastes, whilst he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar are not sweet, and whilst he knows that habit alone has reconciled his palate to these alien pleasures. Even with such a person we may speak, and with sufficient precision, concerning tastes. But should any man be found who declares, that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, and that he cannot distinguish between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are sweet, milk bitter, and sugar sour; we immediately conclude that the organs of this man are out of order, and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with such a person upon tastes, as from reasoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who should deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but absolutely mad. Exceptions of this sort, in either way, do not at all impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity or the taste of things. So that when it is said, taste cannot be disputed, it can only mean, that no one can strictly answer what pleasure or pain some particular man may find from the taste of some particular thing. This indeed cannot be disputed; but we may dispute, and with sufficient clearness too, concerning the things which are naturally pleasing or disagreeable to the sense. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired relish, then we must know the habits, the prejudices, or the distempers of this particular man, and we must draw our conclusion from those.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste solely. The principle of pleasure

derived from sight is the same in all. Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when every thing makes a different appearance. I never remember that any thing beautiful, whether a man, a beast, a bird, or a plant, was ever shewn, though it were to an hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, though some might have thought that it fell short of their expectation, or that other things were still finer. I believe no man thinks a goose to be more beautiful than a swan, or imagines that what they call a Friezland hen excels a peacock. It must be observed too, that the pleasures of the sight are not near so complicated, and confused, and altered by unnatural habits and associations, as the pleasures of the taste are; because the pleasures of the sight more commonly acquiesce in themselves; and are not so often altered by considerations which are independent of the sight itself. But things do not spontaneously present themseves to the palate as they do to the sight; they are generally applied to it, either as food or as medicine; and from the qualities which they possess for nutritive or medicinal purposes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of these associations. Thus opium is pleasing to Turks, on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care, and all consideration of future or present evils. All of these would lie absolutely neglected if their properties had originally gone no further than the taste; but all these, together with tea and coffee, and some other things, have passed from the apothecary's shop to our tables, and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleasure. The effect of the drug has made us use it frequently; and frequent use, combined with the agreeable effect, has made the taste itself at last agreeable. But this does not in the least perplex our reasoning; because we distinguish to the last the acquired from the natural relish. In describing the taste of an unknown fruit, you would scarcely say that it had a sweet and pleasant flavour like tobacco, opium, or garlic, although you spoke to those who were in the constant use of these drugs, and had great pleasure in them. There is in all men a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure, to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppose one who had so vitiated his palate as to take more pleasure in the taste of opium than in that of butter or honey, to be presented with a bolus of squills; there is hardly any doubt but that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauseous morsel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accustomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is still like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in some particular points. For in judging of any new thing, even of a taste similar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner, and on the common principles. Thus the pleasure of all the senses, of the sight, and even of the taste, that most ambiguous of the senses, is the same in all, high and low, learned and unlearned.

Besides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleasures, which are presented by the sense; the mind of man possesses a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it must be observed, that this power of the imagination is incapable of producing any thing absolutely new; it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses. Now the imagination is the most extensive province of pleasure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impression, must have the same power pretty equally over all men. For since the imagination is only the representation of the senses, it can only be pleased or displeased with the images, from the same principle on which the sense is pleased or displeased with the realities; and consequently there must be just as close an agreement in the imaginations as in the senses of men. A little attention will convince us that this must of necessity be the case.

But in the imagination, besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object, a pleasure is perceived from the resemblance, which the imitation has to the original: the imagination, I conceive, can

settling many disputes relative to the senses, and their representative the imagination, we find that the principles are the same in all, and that there is no disagreement until we come to examine into the pre-eminence or difference of things, which brings us within the province of the judgment.

So long as we are conversant with the sensible qualities of things, hardly any more than the imagination seems concerned; little more also than the imagination seems concerned when the passions are represented, because by the force of natural sympathy they are felt in all men without any recourse to reasoning, and their justness recognised in every breast. Love, grief, fear, anger, joy, all these passions have in their turns affected every mind; and they do not affect it in an arbitrary or casual manner, but upon certain, natural, and uniform principles. But as many of the works of imagination are not confined to the representation of sensible objects, nor to efforts upon the passions, but extend themselves to the manners, the characters, the actions, and designs of men, their relations, their virtues and vices, they come within the province of the judgment, which is improved by attention and by the habit of reasoning. All these make a very considerable part of what are considered as the objects of taste; and Horace sends us to the schools of philosophy and the world for our instruction in them. Whatever certainty is to be acquired in morality and the science of life; just the same degree of certainty have we in what relates to them in the works of imitation. Indeed it is for the most part in our skill in manners, and in the observances of time and place, and of decency in general, which is only to be learned in those schools, to which Horace recommends us, that what is called taste, by way of distinction, consists; and which is in reality no other than a more refined judgment. On the whole, it appears to me, that what is called taste, in its most general acceptation, is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty, concerning the various relations of these, and concerning the human passions, manners, and actions. All this is requisite to form taste, and the ground-work of all these is the same in the human mind; for as the senses are the great originals of all our ideas, and consequently of all our pleasures, if they are not uncertain and arbitrary, the whole ground-work of taste is common to all, and therefore there is a sufficient foundation for a conclusive reasoning on these matters.

Whilst we consider taste merely according to its nature and species, we shall find its principles entirely uniform; but the degree in which these principles prevail, in the several individuals of mankind, is altogether as different as the principles themselves are similar. For sensibility and judgment, which are the qualities that compose what we commonly call a *taste*, vary exceedingly in various people. From a defect in the former of these qualities, arises a want of taste; a weakness in the latter, constitutes a wrong or a bad one. There are some men formed with feelings so blunt, with tempers so cold and phlegmatic, that they can hardly be said to be awake during the whole course of their lives. Upon such persons the most striking objects make but a faint and obscure impression. There are others so continually in the agitation of gross and merely sensual pleasures, or so occupied in the low drudgery of avarice, or so heated in the chace of honours and distinction, that their minds, which had been used continually to the storms of these violent and tempestuous passions, can hardly be put in motion by the delicate and refined play of the imagination. These men, though from a different cause, become as stupid and insensible as the former; but whenever either of these happen to be struck with any natural elegance or greatness, or with these qualities in any work of art, they are moved upon the same principle.

The cause of a wrong taste is a defect of judgment. And this may arise from a natural weakness of understanding, (in whatever the strength of that faculty may consist,) or, which is much more commonly the case, it may arise from a want of proper and well-directed exercise, which alone can make it strong and ready. Besides that ignorance, inattention, prejudice, rashness, levity, obstinacy, in short, all those passions, and all those vices, which pervert the judgment in other matters, prejudice it no less in this its more refined and elegant province. These causes produce different opinions upon every thing which is an object of the understanding, without inducing us to suppose that there are no settled principles of reason. And indeed on the whole one may observe, that there is rather less difference upon matters of taste among mankind, than upon most of those which depend upon the naked reason; and that men are far better agreed on the excellence of a description in Virgil, than on the truth or falsehood of a theory of Aristotle.

A rectitude of judgment in the arts, which may be called a good taste, does in a great measure depend upon sensibility; because if the mind has no bent to the pleasures of the imagination, it will never apply itself sufficiently to works of that species to acquire a competent knowledge in them. But, though a degree of sensibility is requisite to form a good judgment, yet a good judgment does not necessarily arise from a quick sensibility of pleasure; it frequently happens that a very poor judge, merely by force of a greater complexional sensibility, is more affected by a very poor piece, than the best judge by the most perfect; for as every thing new, extraordinary, grand, or passionate, is well calculated to affect such a person, and that the faults do not affect him, his pleasure is more pure and unmixed; and as it is merely a pleasure of the imagination, it is much higher than any which is derived from a rectitude of the judgment; the judgment is for the greater part employed in throwing stumbling-blocks in the way of the imagination, in dissipating the scenes of its enchantment, and in tying us down to the disagreeable yoke of our reason: for almost the only pleasure that we have in judging better than others, consists in a sort of conscious pride and superiority, which arises from thinking rightly; but then, this is an indirect pleasure, a pleasure which does not immediately result from the object which is under contemplation. In the morning of our days, when the senses are unworn and tender, when the whole man is awake in every part, and the gloss of novelty fresh upon all the objects that surround us, how lively at that time are our sensations, but how false and inaccurate the judgments we form of things? I despair of ever receiving the same degree of pleasure from the most excellent performances of genius, which I felt at that age from pieces which my present judgment regards as trifling and contemptible. Every trivial cause of pleasure is apt to affect the man of too sanguine a complexion: his appetite is too keen to suffer his taste to be delicate; and he is in all respects what Ovid says of himself in love,

Molle meum levibus cor est violabile telis,
Et semper causa est, cur ego semper amem.

One of this character can never be a refined judge; never what the comic poet calls *elegans formarum spectator*. The excellence and force of a composition must always be imperfectly estimated from its effect on the minds of any, except we know the temper and character of those minds. The most powerful effects of poetry and music have been displayed, and perhaps are still displayed, where these arts are but in a very low and imperfect state. The rude hearer is affected by the principles which operate in these arts even in their rudest condition; and he is not skilful enough to perceive the defects. But as arts advance towards their perfection, the science of criticism advances with equal pace, and the pleasure of judges is frequently interrupted by the faults which are discovered in the most finished compositions.

Before I leave this subject, I cannot help taking notice of an opinion which many persons entertain, as if the taste were a separate faculty of the mind, and distinct from the judgment and imagination; a species of instinct, by which we are struck naturally, and at the first glance, without any previous reasoning, with the excellencies, or the defects of a composition. So far as the imagination and the passions are concerned, I believe it true, that the reason is little consulted; but where disposition, where decorum, where congruity are concerned, in short, wherever the best taste differs from the worst, I am convinced that the understanding operates and nothing else: and its operation is in reality far from being always sudden, or, when it is sudden, it is often far from being right. Men of the best taste by consideration come frequently to change these early and precipitate judgments, which the mind, from its aversion to neutrality and doubt loves to form on the spot. It is known that the taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise. They who have not taken these methods, if their taste decides quickly, it is always uncertainly; and their quickness is owing to their presumption and rashness, and not to any hidden irradiation that in a moment dispels all darkness from their minds. But they who have cultivated that species of knowledge which makes the object of taste, by degrees and habitually attain not only a soundness, but a readiness of judgment, as men do by the same methods on all other occasions. At first they are obliged to spell, but at last they read with ease and with celerity, but this celerity of its operation is no proof, that the taste is a distinct faculty. Nobody, I believe, has attended the course of a discussion, which turned upon matters within the sphere of mere naked reason, but must have observed the extreme readiness with which the whole process of the argument is carried on,

the grounds discovered, the objections raised and answered and the conclusions drawn from premises, with a quickness altogether as great as the taste can be supposed to work with; and yet where nothing but plain reason either is or can be suspected to operate. To multiply principles for every different appearance, is useless, and unphilosophical too in a high degree.

This matter might be pursued much farther; but it is not the extent of the subject which must prescribe our bounds, for what subject does not branch out to infinity? it is the nature of our particular scheme, and the single point of view in which we consider it, which ought to put a stop to our researches.

A

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

INTO THE

ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

PART I.—SECTION I.

NOVELTY.

The first and the simplest emotion which we discover in the human mind, is Curiosity. By curiosity I mean whatever desire we have for, or whatever pleasure we take in, novelty. We see children perpetually running from place to place to hunt out something new: they catch with great eagerness, and with very little choice, at whatever comes before them; their attention is engaged by every thing, because every thing has, in that stage of life, the charm of novelty to recommend it. But as those things which engage us merely by their novelty, cannot attach us for any length of time, curiosity is the most superficial of all the affections; it changes its object perpetually; it has an appetite which is very sharp, but very easily satisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddiness, restlessness and anxiety. Curiosity, from its nature, is a very active principle; it quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects, and soon exhausts the variety which is commonly to be met with in nature; the same things make frequent returns, and they return with less and less of any agreeable effect. In short, the occurrences of life, by the time we come to know it a little, would be incapable of affecting the mind with any other sensations than those of loathing and weariness, if many things were not adapted to affect the mind by means of other powers besides novelty in them, and of other passions besides curiosity in ourselves. These powers and passions shall be considered in their place. But whatever these powers are, or upon what principle soever they affect the mind, it is absolutely necessary that they should not be exerted in those things which a daily and vulgar use have brought into a stale unaffecting familiarity. Some degree of novelty must be one of the materials in every instrument which works upon the mind; and curiosity blends itself more or less with all our passions.

SECTION II.

PAIN AND PLEASURE.

It seems then necessary towards moving the passions of people advanced in life to any considerable degree, that the objects designed for that purpose, besides their being in some measure new, should be capable of exciting pain or pleasure from other causes. Pain and pleasure are simple ideas, incapable of definition. People are not liable to be mistaken in their feelings, but they are very frequently wrong in the names they give them, and in their reasonings about them. Many are of opinion, that pain arises necessarily from the removal of some pleasure; as they think pleasure does from the ceasing or diminution of some pain. For my part, I am rather inclined to imagine, that pain and pleasure, in their most simple and natural manner of affecting, are each of a positive nature, and by no means necessarily dependent on each other for their existence. The human mind is often, and I think it is for the most part, in a state neither of pain nor pleasure, which I call a state of indifference. When I am carried from this state into a state of actual pleasure, it does not appear necessary that I should pass through the medium of any sort of pain. If in such a state of indifference, or ease, or tranquillity, or call it what you please, you were to be suddenly entertained with a concert of music; or suppose some object of a fine shape, and bright lively colours, to be presented before

you; or imagine your smell is gratified with the fragrance of a rose; or if without any previous thirst you were to drink of some pleasant kind of wine, or to taste of some sweetmeat without being hungry; in all the several senses, of hearing, smelling, and tasting, you undoubtedly find a pleasure; yet if I inquire into the state of your mind previous to these gratifications, you will hardly tell me that they found you in any kind of pain; or, having satisfied these several senses with their several pleasures, will you say that any pain has succeeded, though the pleasure is absolutely over? Suppose, on the other hand, a man in the same state of indifference, to receive a violent blow, or to drink of some bitter potion, or to have his ears wounded with some harsh and grating sound; here is no removal of pleasure; and yet here is felt, in every sense which is affected, a pain very distinguishable. It may be said, perhaps, that the pain in these cases had its rise from the removal of the pleasure which the man enjoyed before, though that pleasure was of so low a degree as to be perceived only by the removal. But this seems to me a subtilty, that is not discoverable in nature. For if, previous to the pain, I do not feel any actual pleasure, I have no reason to judge that any such thing exists; since pleasure is only pleasure as it is felt. The same may be said of pain, and with equal reason. I can never persuade myself that pleasure and pain are mere relations, which can only exist as they are contrasted; but I think I can discern clearly that there are positive pains and pleasures, which do not at all depend upon each other. Nothing is more certain to my own feelings than this. There is nothing which I can distinguish in my mind with more clearness than the three states, of indifference, of pleasure, and of pain. Every one of these I can perceive without any sort of idea of its relation to any thing else. Caius is afflicted with a fit of the cholic; this man is actually in pain; stretch Caius upon the rack, he will feel a much greater pain: but does this pain of the rack arise from the removal of any pleasure? or is the fit of the cholic a pleasure or a pain just as we are pleased to consider it?

SECTION III.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE REMOVAL OF PAIN AND POSITIVE PLEASURE.

We shall carry this proposition yet a step farther. We shall venture to propose, that pain and pleasure are not only not necessarily dependent for their existence on their mutual diminution or removal, but that, in reality, the diminution or ceasing of pleasure does not operate like positive pain; and that the removal or diminution of pain, in its effect, has very little resemblance to positive pleasure.* The former of these propositions will, I believe, be much more readily allowed than the latter; because it is very evident that pleasure when it has run its career, sets us down very nearly where it found us. Pleasure of every kind quickly satisfies; and when it is over, we relapse into indifference, or rather we fall into a soft tranquillity, which is tinged with the agreeable colour of the former sensation. I own it is not at first view so apparent, that the removal of a great pain does not resemble positive pleasure; but let us recollect in what state we have found our minds upon escaping some imminent danger, or on being released from the severity of some cruel pain. We have on such occasions found, if I am not much mistaken, the temper of our minds in a tenour very remote from that which attends the presence of positive pleasure: we have found them in a state of much sobriety, impressed with a sense of awe, in a sort of tranquillity shadowed with horrour. The fashion of the countenance and the gesture of the body on such occasions is so correspondent to this state of mind, that any person, a stranger to the cause of the appearance, would rather judge us under some consternation, than in the enjoyment of any thing like positive pleasure.

Ως δ' οταν ανδρ' ατη πυκινη λαβη, οστ' ενι πατρη
Φωτα κατακτεινας, αλλον εξικετο δημον,
Ανδρος ες αφνειου, θαμβος, δ' εχει εισορωντας.
ILIAD. 24.

As when a wretch, who, conscious of his crime,
Pursued for murder from his native clime,
Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale, amaz'd;
All gaze, all wonder!

This striking appearance of the man whom Homer supposes to have just escaped an imminent danger, the sort of mixed passion of terrour and surprise, with which he affects the spectators, paints very strongly the manner in which we find ourselves affected upon occasions any way similar. For when we have suffered

* Mr. Locke [Essay on Human Understanding, l. ii. c. 20. sect. 16.] thinks that the removal or lessening of a pain is considered and operates as a pleasure, and the loss or diminishing of pleasure as a pain. It is this opinion which we consider here.

from any violent emotion, the mind naturally continues in something like the same condition, after the cause which first produced it has ceased to operate. The tossing of the sea remains after the storm; and when this remain of horrour has entirely subsided, all the passion, which the accident raised, subsides along with it; and the mind returns to its usual state of indifference. In short, pleasure, (I mean any thing either in the inward sensation, or in the outward appearance, like pleasure from a positive cause,) has never, I imagine, its origin from the removal of pain or danger.

SECTION IV.

OF DELIGHT AND PLEASURE AS OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER.

But shall we therefore say, that the removal of pain or its diminution is always simply painful? or affirm that the cessation or the lessening of pleasure is always attended itself with a pleasure? By no means. What I advance is no more than this; first, that there are pleasures and pains of a positive and independent nature; and secondly, that the feeling which results from the ceasing or diminution of pain does not bear a sufficient resemblance to positive pleasure, to have it considered as of the same nature, or to entitle it to be known by the same name; and thirdly, that upon the same principle the removal or qualification of pleasure has no resemblance to positive pain. It is certain that the former feeling (the removal or moderation of pain) has something in it far from distressing or disagreeable in its nature. This feeling, in many cases so agreeable, but in all so different from positive pleasure, has no name which I know; but that hinders not its being a very real one, and very different from all others. It is most certain, that every species of satisfaction or pleasure, how different soever in its manner of affecting, is of a positive nature in the mind of him who feels it. The affection is undoubtedly positive; but the cause may be, as in this case it certainly is, a sort of *Privation*. And it is very reasonable that we should distinguish by some term two things so distinct in nature, as a pleasure that is such simply, and without any relation, from that pleasure which cannot exist without a relation, and that too a relation to pain. Very extraordinary it would be, if these affections, so distinguishable in their causes, so different in their effects, should be confounded with each other, because vulgar use has ranged them under the same general title. Whenever I have occasion to speak of this species of relative pleasure, I call it *Delight*; and I shall take the best care I can, to use that word in no other sense. I am satisfied the word is not commonly used in this appropriated signification; but I thought it better to take up a word already known, and to limit its signification, than to introduce a new one, which would not perhaps incorporate so well with the language. I should never have presumed the least alteration in our words, if the nature of the language, framed for the purposes of business rather than those of philosophy, and the nature of my subject, that leads me out of the common track of discourse, did not in a manner necessitate me to it. I shall make use of this liberty with all possible caution. As I make use of the word *Delight* to express the sensation which accompanies the removal of pain or danger; so when I speak of positive pleasure, I shall for the most part call it simply *Pleasure*.

SECTION V.

JOY AND GRIEF.

It must be observed, that the cessation of pleasure affects the mind three ways. If it simply ceases, after having continued a proper time, the effect is *indifference*; if it be abruptly broken off, there ensues an uneasy sense called *disappointment*; if the object be so totally lost that there is no chance of enjoying it again, a passion arises in the mind, which is called *grief*. Now there is none of these, not even grief, which is the most violent, that I think has any resemblance to positive pain. The person who grieves, suffers his passion to grow upon him; he indulges it, he loves it; but this never happens in the case of actual pain, which no man ever willingly endured for any considerable time. That grief should be willingly endured, though far from a simply pleasing sensation, is not so difficult to be understood. It is the nature of grief to keep its object perpetually in its eye, to present it in its most pleasurable views, to repeat all the circumstances that attend it, even to the last minuteness; to go back to every particular enjoyment, to dwell upon each, and to find a thousand new perfections in all, that were not sufficiently understood before; in grief, the *pleasure* is still uppermost; and the affliction we suffer has no resemblance to absolute pain, which is always odious, and which we endea-

vour to shake off as soon as possible. The Odyssey of Homer, which abounds with so many natural and affecting images, has none more striking than those which Menelaus raises of the calamitous fate of his friends, and his own manner of feeling it. He owns, indeed, that he often gives himself some intermission from such melancholy reflections; but he observes, too, that, melancholy as they are, they give him pleasure.

Αλλ' εμπης παντας μεν οδυρομενος και αχευων,
Πολλακις εν μεγαροισι καθημενος ημετεροισιν,
Αλλοτε μεν τε γοω φρενα τερπομαι, αλλοτε δ' αυτε
Παυομαι· αιψηρος δε κορος κρυεροιο γοοιο.

Still in short intervals of *pleasing woe*,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
Indulge the tribute of a *grateful* tear.

Hom. Od. iv.

On the other hand, when we recover our health, when we escape an imminent danger, is it with joy that we are affected? The sense on these occasions is far from that smooth and voluptuous satisfaction which the assured prospect of pleasure bestows. The delight which arises from the modifications of pain, confesses the stock from whence it sprung, in its solid, strong, and severe nature.

SECTION VI.

OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SELF-PRESERVATION.

Most of the ideas which are capable of making a powerful impression on the mind, whether simply of Pain or Pleasure, or of the modifications of those, may be reduced very nearly to these two heads, *self-preservation* and *society*; to the ends of one or the other of which all our passions are calculated to answer. The passions which concern self-preservation, turn mostly on *pain* or *danger*. The ideas of *pain*, *sickness* and *death*, fill the mind with strong emotions of horrour; but *life* and *health*, though they put us in a capacity of being affected with pleasure, they make no such impression by the simple enjoyment. The passions therefore which are conversant about the preservation of the individual, turn chiefly on *pain* and *danger*, and they are the most powerful of all the passions.

SECTION VII.

OF THE SUBLIME.

Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terrour, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure. Without all doubt, the torments which we may be made to suffer, are much greater in their effect on the body and mind, than any pleasures which the most learned voluptuary could suggest, or than the liveliest imagination, and the most sound and exquisitely sensible body, could enjoy. Nay, I am in great doubt whether any man could be found, who would earn a life of the most perfect satisfaction, at the price of ending it in the torments, which justice inflicted in a few hours on the late unfortunate regicide in France. But as pain is stronger in its operation than pleasure, so death is in general a much more affecting idea than pain; because there are very few pains, however exquisite, which are not preferred to death: nay, what generally makes pain itself, if I may say so, more painful, is, that it is considered as an emissary of this king of terrours. When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience. The cause of this I shall endeavour to investigate hereafter.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE PASSIONS WHICH BELONG TO SOCIETY.

The other head under which I class our passions, is that of *society*, which may be divided into two sorts. 1. The society of the *sexes*, which answers the purpose of propagation; and next, that more *general society*, which we have with men and with other animals, and which we may in some sort be said to have even with the inanimate world. The passions belonging to the preservation of the individual, turn wholly on pain and danger: those which

belong to *generation*, have their origin in gratifications and *pleasures*; the pleasure most directly belonging to this purpose is of a lively character, rapturous and violent, and confessedly the highest pleasure of sense; yet the absence of this so great an enjoyment, scarce amounts to an uneasiness; and, except at particular times, I do not think it affects at all. When men describe in what manner they are affected by pain and danger, they do not dwell on the pleasure of health and the comfort of security, and then lament the *loss* of these satisfactions: the whole turns upon the actual pains and horrours which they endure. But if you listen to the complaints of a forsaken lover, you observe that he insists largely on the pleasures which he enjoyed, or hoped to enjoy, and on the perfection of the object of his desires; it is the *loss* which is always uppermost in his mind. The violent effects produced by love, which has sometimes been even wrought up to madness, is no objection to the rule which we seek to establish. When men have suffered their imaginations to be long affected with any idea, it so wholly engrosses them as to shut out by degrees almost every other, and to break down every partition of the mind which would confine it. Any idea is sufficient for the purpose, as is evident from the infinite variety of causes, which give rise to madness; but this at most can only prove, that the passion of love is capable of producing very extraordinary effects, not that its extraordinary emotions have any connection with positive pain.

SECTION IX.

THE FINAL CAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PASSIONS BELONGING TO SELF-PRESERVATION, AND THOSE WHICH REGARD THE SOCIETY OF THE SEXES.

The final cause of the difference in character between the passions which regard self-preservation, and those which are directed to the multiplication of the species, will illustrate the foregoing remarks yet further; and it is, I imagine, worthy of observation even upon its own account. As the performance of our duties of every kind depends upon life, and the performing them with vigour and efficacy depends upon health, we are very strongly affected with whatever threatens the destruction of either: but as we were not made to acquiesce in life and health, the simple enjoyment of them is not attended with any real pleasure, lest, satisfied with that, we should give ourselves over to indolence and inaction. On the other hand, the generation of mankind is a great purpose, and it is requisite that men should be animated to the pursuit of it by some great incentive. It is therefore attended with a very high pleasure; but as it is by no means designed to be our constant business, it is not fit that the absence of this pleasure should be attended with any considerable pain. The difference between men and brutes in this point, seems to be remarkable. Men are at all times pretty equally disposed to the pleasures of love, because they are to be guided by reason in the time and manner of indulging them. Had any great pain arisen from the want of this satisfaction, reason, I am afraid, would find great difficulties in the performance of its office. But brutes, who obey laws, in the execution of which their own reason has but little share, have their stated seasons; at such times it is not improbable that the sensation from the want is very troublesome, because the end must be then answered, or be missed in many, perhaps for ever; as the inclination returns only with its season.

SECTION X.

OF BEAUTY.

The passion which belongs to generation, merely as such, is lust only. This is evident in brutes, whose passions are more unmixed, and which pursue their purposes more directly than ours. The only distinction they observe with regard to their mates, is that of sex. It is true, that they stick severally to their own species in preference to all others. But this preference, I imagine, does not arise from any sense of beauty which they find in their species, as Mr. Addison supposes, but from a law of some other kind, to which they are subject; and this we may fairly conclude, from their apparent want of choice among those objects to which the barriers of their species have confined them. But man, who is a creature adapted to a greater variety and intricacy of relation, connects with the general passion, the idea of some *social* qualities, which direct and heighten the appetite which he has in common with all other animals; and as he is not designed like them to live at large, it is fit that he should have something to create a preference, and fix his choice; and this in general

should be some sensible quality; as no other can so quickly, so powerfully, or so surely produce its effect. The object therefore of this mixed passion, which we call love, is the *beauty* of the *sex*. Men are carried to the sex in general, as it is the sex, and by the common law of nature; but they are attached to particulars by personal *beauty*. I call beauty a social quality; for where women and men, and not only they, but when other animals give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them, (and there are many that do so,) they inspire us with sentiments of tenderness and affection towards their persons; we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unless we should have strong reasons to the contrary. But to what end, in many cases, this was designed, I am unable to discover; for I see no greater reason for a connection between man and several animals who are attired in so engaging a manner, than between him and some others who entirely want this attraction, or possess it in a far weaker degree. But it is probable, that Providence did not make even this distinction, but with a view to some great end, though we cannot perceive distinctly what it is, as his wisdom is not our wisdom, nor our ways his ways.

SECTION XI.

SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE.

The second branch of the social passions is that which administers to *society in general*. With regard to this, I observe, that society, merely as society, without any particular heightenings, gives us no positive pleasure in the enjoyment; but absolute and entire *solitude*, that is, the total and perpetual exclusion from all society, is as great a positive pain as can almost be conceived. Therefore in the balance between the pleasure of general *society*, and the pain of absolute solitude, *pain* is the predominant idea. But the pleasure of any particular social enjoyment outweighs very considerably the uneasiness caused by the want of that particular enjoyment; so that the strongest sensations relative to the habitudes of *particular society*, are sensations of pleasure. Good company, lively conversations, and the endearments of friendship, fill the mind with great pleasure; a temporary solitude, on the other hand, is itself agreeable. This may perhaps prove that we are creatures designed for contemplation as well as action; since solitude as well as society has its pleasures; as from the former observation we may discern, that an entire life of solitude contradicts the purposes of our being, since death itself is scarcely an idea of more terrour.

SECTION XII.

SYMPATHY, IMITATION, AND AMBITION.

Under this denomination of society, the passions are of a complicated kind, and branch out into a variety of forms agreeable to that variety of ends they are to serve in the great chain of society. The three principal links in this chain are *sympathy*, *imitation*, and *ambition*.

SECTION XIII.

SYMPATHY.

It is by the first of these passions that we enter into the concerns of others; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of almost any thing which men can do or suffer. For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected: so that this passion may either partake of the nature of those which regard self-preservation, and turning upon pain may be a source of the sublime; or it may turn upon ideas of pleasure; and then whatever has been said of the social affections, whether they regard society in general, or only some particular modes of it, may be applicable here. It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one breast to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself. It is a common observation, that objects which in the reality would shock, are in tragical, and such like representations, the source of a very high species of pleasure. This taken as a fact, has been the cause of much reasoning. The satisfaction has been commonly attributed, first, to the comfort we receive in considering that so melancholy a story is no more than a fiction; and next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we see represented. I am afraid it is a practice much too common in enquiries of this nature, to attribute the cause of feelings which merely arise from the mechanical struc-

ture of our bodies, or from the natural frame and constitution of our minds, to certain conclusions of the reasoning faculty on the objects presented to us; for I should imagine, that the influence of reason in producing our passions is nothing near so extensive as it is commonly believed.

SECTION XIV.

THE EFFECTS OF SYMPATHY IN THE DISTRESSES OF OTHERS.

To examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we must previously consider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumstances of real distress. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others: for let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun such objects, if on the contrary it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this case I conceive we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedon, and the distress of its unhappy prince. Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight, in cases of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause he adhered to, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other; for terrour is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too close; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it, is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there most where our sympathy is most wanted, in the distresses of others. If this passion was simply painful, we would shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as some, who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression, actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things, hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer; and all this antecedent to any reasoning, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes without our concurrence.

SECTION XV.

OF THE EFFECTS OF TRAGEDY.

It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never so perfect, but we can perceive it is imitation, and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And indeed in some cases we derive as much or more pleasure from that source than from the thing itself. But then I imagine we shall be much mistaken if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it will, it never approaches to what it represents. Choose a day on which to represent the most sublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the most favourite actors; spare no cost upon the scenes and decorations; unite the greatest efforts of poetry, painting, and music; and when you have collected your audience, just at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence,

that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we should be eager enough to see if it was once done. We delight in seeing things, which so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed. This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger. But suppose such a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and among them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory! Nor is it, either in real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight; in my own mind I can discover nothing like it. I apprehend that this mistake is owing to a sort of sophism, by which we are frequently imposed upon; it arises from our not distinguishing between what is indeed a necessary condition to our doing or suffering any thing in general, and what is the *cause* of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword, it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both of us alive before the fact; and yet it would be absurd to say, that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard, before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary, or indeed in any thing else from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cause of my delight either on these or on any occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind, I believe; nay, when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others, whilst we suffer ourselves; and often then most when we are softened by affliction; we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.

SECTION XVI.

IMITATION.

The second passion belonging to society is imitation, or, if you will, a desire of imitating, and consequently a pleasure in it. This passion arises from much the same cause with sympathy. For as sympathy makes us take a concern in whatever men feel, so this affection prompts us to copy whatever they do; and consequently we have a pleasure in imitating, and in whatever belongs to imitation merely as it is such, without any interventien of the reasoning faculty; but solely from our natural constitution, which Providence has framed in such a manner as to find either pleasure or delight, according to the nature of the object, in whatever regards the purposes of our being. It is by imitation far more than by precept, that we learn every thing; and what we learn thus, we acquire not only more effectually, but more pleasantly. This forms our manners, our opinions, our lives. It is one of the strongest links of society; it is a species of mutual compliance, which all men yield to each other, without constraint to themselves, and which is extremely flattering to all. Herein it is that painting and many other agreeable arts have laid one of the principal foundations of their power. And since, by its influence on our manners and our passions, it is of such great consequence, I shall here venture to lay down a rule, which may inform us with a good degree of certainty when we are to attribute the power of the arts to imitation, or to our pleasure in the skill of the imitator merely, and when to sympathy, or some other cause in conjuntion with it. When the object represented in poetry or painting is such as we could have no desire of seeing in the reality, then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cause operating in the thing itself. So it is with most of the pieces which the painters call still-life. In these a cottage, a dunghill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleasure. But when the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, let it affect us with what odd sort of sense it will, we may rely upon it, that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itself than to the mere effect of imitation, or to a consideration of the skill of the imitator, however excellent. Aristotle has spoken so much and so solidly upon the force of imitation in his Poetics, that it makes any further discourse upon this subject the less necessary.

SECTION XVII.

AMBITION.

Although imitation is one of the great instruments used by Providence in bringing our

nature towards its perfection, yet if men gave themselves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, and so on in an eternal circle, it is easy to see that there never could be any improvement among them. Men must remain as brutes do, the same at the end that they are at this day, and that they were in the beginning of the world. To prevent this, God has planted in man a sense of ambition, and a satisfaction arising from the contemplation of his excelling his fellows in something deemed valuable among them. It is this passion that drives men to all the ways we see in use of signalizing themselves, and that tends to make whatever excites in a man the idea of this distinction so very pleasant. It has been so strong as to make very miserable men take comfort, that they were supreme in misery; and certain it is, that where we cannot distinguish ourselves by something excellent, we begin to take a complacency in some singular infirmities, follies, or defects of one kind or other. It is on this principle that flattery is so prevalent; for flattery is no more than what raises in a man's mind an idea of a preference which he has not. Now, whatever, either on good or upon bad grounds, tends to raise a man in his own opinion, produces a sort of swelling and triumph, that is extremely grateful to the human mind; and this swelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when without danger we are conversant with terrible objects, the mind always claiming to itself some part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. Hence proceeds what Longinus has observed of that glorying sense of inward greatness, that always fills the reader of such passages in poets and orators as are sublime; it is what every man must have felt in himself upon such occasions.

SECTION XVIII.

THE RECAPITULATION.

To draw the whole of what has been said into a few distinct points:—The passions which belong to self-preservation turn on pain and danger; they are simply painful when their causes immediately affect us; they are delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in such circumstances; this delight I have not called pleasure, because it turns on pain, and because it is different enough from any idea of positive pleasure. Whatever excites this delight, I call *sublime*. The passions belonging to self-preservation are the strongest of all the passions.

The second head to which the passions are referred with relation to their final cause, is society. There are two sorts of societies. The first is, the society of sex. The passion belonging to this is called love, and it contains a mixture of lust; its object is the beauty of women. The other is the great society with man and all other animals. The passion subservient to this is called likewise love, but it has no mixture of lust, and its object is beauty; which is a name I shall apply to all such qualities in things as induce in us a sense of affection and tenderness, or some other passion the most nearly resembling these. The passion of love has its rise in positive pleasure; it is, like all things which grow out of pleasure, capable of being mixed with a mode of uneasiness, that is, when an idea of its object is excited in the mind with an idea at the same time of having irretrievably lost it. This mixed sense of pleasure I have not called *pain*, because it turns upon actual pleasure, and because it is, both in its cause and in most of its effects, of a nature altogether different.

Next to the general passion we have for society, to a choice in which we are directed by the pleasure we have in the object, the particular passion under this head called sympathy has the greatest extent. The nature of this passion is, to put us in the place of another in whatever circumstance he is in, and to affect us in a like manner; so that this passion may, as the occasion requires, turn either on pain or pleasure: but with the modifications mentioned in some cases in sect. II. As to imitation and preference, nothing more need be said.

SECTION XIX.

THE CONCLUSION.

I BELIEVED that an attempt to range and methodize some of our most leading passions, would be a good preparative to such an inquiry as we are going to make in the ensuing discourse. The passions I have mentioned are almost the only ones which it can be necessary to consider in our present design; though the variety of the passions is great, and worthy in every branch of that variety of an attentive investigation. The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we every where find of his wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the

body may be considered as an hymn to the Creator; the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren of praise to him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind; whilst, referring to him whatever we find of right or good or fair in ourselves, discovering his strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection, honouring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I may dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty by a consideration of his works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies, which if they do not in some measure effect, they are of very little service to us. But, besides this great purpose, a consideration of the rationale of our passions seems to me very necessary for all who would affect them upon solid and sure principles. It is not enough to know them in general: to affect them after a delicate manner, or to judge properly of any work designed to affect them, we should know the exact boundaries of their several jurisdictions; we should pursue them through all their variety of operations, and pierce into the inmost, and what might appear inaccessible parts of our nature,

Quod latet arcana non enarrabile fibra.

Without all this it is possible for a man, after a confused manner, sometimes to satisfy his own mind of the truth of his work; but he can never have a certain determinate rule to go by, nor can he ever make his propositions sufficiently clear to others. Poets, and orators, and painters, and those who cultivate other branches of the liberal arts, have without this critical knowledge succeeded well in their several provinces, and will succeed; as among artificers there are many machines made and even invented without any exact knowledge of the principles they are governed by. It is, I own, not uncommon to be wrong in theory and right in practice; and we are happy that it is so. Men often act right from their feelings, who afterwards reason but ill on them from principle; but as it is impossible to avoid an attempt at such reasoning, and equally impossible to prevent its having some influence on our practice, surely it is worth taking some pains to have it just, and founded on the basis of sure experience. We might expect that the artists themselves would have been our surest guides; but the artists have been too much occupied in the practice: the philosophers have done little; and what they have done, was mostly with a view to their own schemes and systems: and as for those called critics, they have generally sought the rule of the arts in the wrong place; they sought it among poems, pictures, engravings, statues, and buildings. But art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reason why artists in general, and poets principally, have been confined in so narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature; and this with so faithful an uniformity, and to so remote an antiquity, that it is hard to say who gave the first model. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of any thing, whilst I measure it by no other standard than itself. The true standard of the arts is in every man's power; and an easy observation of the most common, sometimes of the meanest things in nature, will give the truest lights, where the greatest sagacity and industry that slights such observation, must leave us in the dark, or, what is worse, amuse and mislead us by false lights. In an inquiry it is almost every thing to be once in a right road. I am satisfied I have done but little by these observations considered in themselves; and I never should have taken the pains to digest them, much less should I have ever ventured to publish them, if I was not convinced that nothing tends more to the corruption of science than to suffer it to stagnate. These waters must be troubled before they can exert their virtues. A man who works beyond the surface of things, though he may be wrong himself, yet he clears the way for others, and may chance to make even his errors subservient to the cause of truth. In the following parts I shall inquire what things they are that cause in us the affections of the sublime and beautiful, as in this I have considered the affections themselves. I only desire one favour, that no part of this discourse may be judged of by itself, and independently of the rest; for I am sensible I have not disposed my materials to abide the test of a captious controversy, but of a sober and even forgiving examination; that they are not armed at all points for battle, but dressed to visit those who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to truth.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.—SECTION I.

OF THE PASSION CAUSED BY THE SUBLIME.

THE passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horrour.* In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that, far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferiour effects are admiration, reverence and respect.

SECTION II.

TERROUR.

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.† For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terrour be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terrour; as serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. And to things of great dimensions, if we annex an adventitious idea of terrour, they become without comparison greater. A level plain of a vast extent on land, is certainly no mean idea; the prospect of such a plain may be as extensive as a prospect of the ocean: but can it ever fill the mind with any thing so great as the ocean itself? This is owing to several causes; but it is owing to none more than this, that the ocean is an object of no small terrour. Indeed terrour is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently, the ruling principle of the sublime. Several languages bear a strong testimony to the affinity of these ideas. They frequently use the same word, to signify indifferently the modes of astonishment or admiration and those of terrour. Θαμβος is in Greek, either fear or wonder; δεινος is terrible or respectable; αιδεω, to reverence or to fear. *Vereor* in Latin, is what αιδεω is in Greek. The Romans used the verb *stupeo*, a term which strongly marks the state of an astonished mind, to express the effect either of simple fear, or of astonishment; the word *attonitus* (thunderstruck) is equally expressive of the alliance of these ideas; and do not the French *etonnement*, and the English *astonishment* and *amazement*, point out as clearly the kindred emotions which attend fear and wonder? They who have a more general knowledge of languages, could produce, I make no doubt, many other and equally striking examples.

SECTION III.

OBSCURITY.

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity‡ seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Those despotic governments, which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. No person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting terrible things, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light, by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton. His description of death in the second book is admirably studied; it is astonishing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a significant and expressive uncertainty of strokes and colouring,

* Part I. sect. 3, 4, 7.
† Part IV. sect. 3, 4, 5, 6.
‡ Part IV. sect. 14, 15, 16.

he has finished the portrait of the king of terrours:

——————The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd;
For each seem'd either; black he stood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And shook a deadly dart. What seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

In this description all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree.

SECTION IV.

OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLEARNESS AND OBSCURITY WITH REGARD TO THE PASSIONS.

It is one thing to make an idea clear, and another to make it affecting to the imagination. If I make a drawing of a palace, or a temple, or a landscape, I present a very clear idea of those objects; but then (allowing for the effect of imitation, which is something) my picture can at most affect only as the palace, temple, or landscape, would have affected in the reality. On the other hand, the most lively and spirited verbal description I can give, raises a very obscure and imperfect *idea* of such objects; but then it is in my power to raise a stronger *emotion* by the description than I could do by the best painting. This experience constantly evinces. The proper manner of conveying the *affections* of the mind from one to another, is by words; there is a great insufficiency in all other methods of communication; and so far is a clearness of imagery from being absolutely necessary to an influence upon the passions, that they may be considerably operated upon, without presenting any image at all, by certain sounds adapted to that purpose; of which we have a sufficient proof in the acknowledged and powerful effects of instrumental music. In reality, a great clearness helps but little towards affecting the passions, as it is in some sort an enemy to all enthusiasms whatsoever.

SECTION [IV.]

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

There are two verses in Horace's Art of Poetry that seem to contradict this opinion, for which reason I shall take a little more pains in clearing it up. The verses are,

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

On this the Abbé du Bos founds a criticism, wherein he gives painting the preference to poetry in the article of moving the passions; principally on account of the greater *clearness* of the ideas it represents. I believe this excellent judge was led into this mistake (if it be a mistake) by his system, to which he found it more conformable than I imagine it will be found by experience. I know several who admire and love painting, and yet who regard the objects of their admiration in that art with coolness enough in comparison of that warmth with which they are animated by affecting pieces of poetry or rhetoric. Among the common sort of people, I never could perceive that painting had much influence on their passions. It is true, that the best sorts of painting, as well as the best sorts of poetry, are not much understood in that sphere. But it is most certain, that their passions are very strongly roused by a fanatic preacher, or by the ballads of Chevy-chace, or the Children in the Wood, and by other little popular poems and tales that are current in that rank of life. I do not know of any paintings, bad or good, that produce the same effect. So that poetry, with all its obscurity, has a more general, as well as a more powerful dominion over the passions, than the other art. And I think there are reasons in nature, why the obscure idea, when properly conveyed, should be more affecting than the clear. It is our ignorance of things that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions. Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little. It is thus with the vulgar; and all men are as the vulgar in what they do not understand. The ideas of eternity, and infinity, are among the most affecting we have: and yet perhaps there is nothing of which we really understand so little, as of infinity and eternity. We do not any where meet a more sublime description than this justly celebrated one of Milton, wherein he gives the portrait of Satan with a dignity so suitable to the subject:

——————He above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new ris'n
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon

In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations; and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.——————

Here is a very noble picture; and in what does this poetical picture consist? in images of a tower, an archangel, the sun rising through mists, or in an eclipse, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolutions of kingdoms. The mind is hurried out of itself, by a crowd of great and confused images; which affect because they are crowded and confused. For separate them, and you lose much of the greatness; and join them, and you infallibly lose the clearness. The images raised by poetry are always of this obscure kind; though in general the effects of poetry are by no means to be attributed to the images it raises; which point we shall examine more at large hereafter.* But painting, when we have allowed for the pleasure of imitation, can only affect simply by the images it presents; and even in painting, a judicious obscurity in some things contributes to the effect of the picture; because the images in painting are exactly similar to those in nature; and in nature, dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander passions, than those have which are more clear and determinate. But where and when this observation may be applied to practice, and how far it shall be extended, will be better deduced from the nature of the subject, and from the occasion, than from any rules that can be given.

I am sensible that this idea has met with opposition, and is likely still to be rejected by several. But let it be considered, that hardly any thing can strike the mind with its greatness, which does not make some sort of approach towards infinity; which nothing can do whilst we are able to perceive its bounds; but to see an object distinctly, and to perceive its bounds, is one and the same thing. A clear idea is therefore another name for a little idea. There is a passage in the book of Job amazingly sublime, and this sublimity is principally due to the terrible uncertainty of the thing described: *In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face. The hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still,* but I could not discern the form thereof; *an image was before mine eyes; there was silence; and I heard a voice,—Shall mortal man be more just than God?* We are first prepared with the utmost solemnity for the vision; we are first terrified, before we are let even into the obscure cause of our emotion; but when this grand cause of terrour makes its appearance, what is it? is it not wrapt up in the shades of its own incomprehensible darkness, more awful, more striking, more terrible, than the liveliest description, than the clearest painting, could possibly represent it? When painters have attempted to give us clear representations of these very fanciful and terrible ideas, they have, I think, almost always failed; insomuch that I have been at a loss, in all the pictures I have seen of hell, whether the painter did not intend something ludicrous. Several painters have handled a subject of this kind with a view of assembling as many horrid phantoms as their imaginations could suggest; but all the designs I have chanced to meet of the temptations of St. Anthony, were rather a sort of odd, wild grotesques, than any thing capable of producing a serious passion. In all these subjects poetry is very happy. Its apparitions, its chimeras, its harpies, its allegorical figures, are grand and affecting; and though Virgil's Fame, and Homer's Discord, are obscure, they are magnificent figures. These figures in painting would be clear enough, but I fear they might become ridiculous.

* Part V.

SECTION V.

POWER.

Besides those things which *directly* suggest the idea of danger, and those which produce a similar effect from a mechanical cause, I know of nothing sublime, which is not some modification of power. And this branch rises as naturally as the other two branches, from terrour, the common stock of every thing that is sublime. The idea of power, at first view, seems of the class of those indifferent ones, which may equally belong to pain or to pleasure. But in reality, the affection arising from the idea of vast power is extremely remote from that neutral character. For first, we must remember,† that the idea of pain, in its highest degree, is much stronger than the highest degree of pleasure; and that it preserves the same superiority through all the subordinate gradations. From hence it is, that where the chances for equal degrees of suffering or enjoyment are in any sort equal, the idea of the suffering must always be prevalent. And indeed the ideas of pain, and above all of death, are so very affecting, that whilst we remain in the presence of whatever is supposed to have the power of in-

† Part I. sect. 7

flicting either, it is impossible to be perfectly free from terrour. Again, we know by experience, that for the enjoyment of pleasure, no great efforts of power are at all necessary; nay, we know, that such efforts would go a great way towards destroying our satisfaction; for pleasure must be stolen, and not forced upon us; pleasure follows the will; and therefore we are generally affected with it by many things of a force greatly inferiour to our own. But pain is always inflicted by a power in some way superiour, because we never submit to pain willingly. So that strength, violence, pain, and terrour, are ideas that rush in upon the mind together. Look at a man, or any other animal of prodigious strength, and what is your idea before reflection? Is it that this strength will be subservient to you, to your ease, to your pleasure, to your interest in any sense? No; the emotion you feel is, lest this enormous strength should be employed to the purposes of rapine* and destruction. That power derives all its sublimity from the terrour with which it is generally accompanied, will appear evidently from its effect in the very few cases in which it may be possible to strip a considerable degree of strength of its ability to hurt. When you do this, you spoil it of every thing sublime, and it immediately becomes contemptible. An ox is a creature of vast strength, but he is an innocent creature, extremely serviceable, and not at all dangerous; for which reason the idea of an ox is by no means grand. A bull is strong too: but his strength is of another kind; often very destructive, seldom (at least among us) of any use in our business; the idea of a bull is therefore great, and it has frequently a place in sublime descriptions, and elevating comparisons. Let us look at another strong animal, in the two distinct lights in which we may consider him. The horse in the light of an useful beast, fit for the plough, the road, the draft; in every social useful light, the horse has nothing sublime: but is it thus that we are affected with him, *whose neck is clothed with thunder, the glory of whose nostrils is terrible, who swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth that it is the sound of the trumpet?* In this description the useful character of the horse entirely disappears, and the terrible and sublime blaze out together. We have continually about us animals of a strength that is considerable, but not pernicious. Among these we never look for the sublime; it comes upon us in the gloomy forest, and in the howling wilderness, in the form of the lion, the tiger, the panther, or rhinoceros. Whenever strength is only useful, and employed for our benefit or our pleasure, then it is never sublime; for nothing can act agreeably to us, that does not act in conformity to our will; but to act agreeably to our will, it must be subject to us, and therefore can never be the cause of a grand and commanding conception. The description of the wild ass, in Job, is worked up into no small sublimity, merely by insisting on his freedom, and his setting mankind at defiance; otherwise the description of such an animal could have nothing noble in it. *Who hath loosed* (says he,) *the bands of the wild ass? whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the voice of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture.* The magnificent description of the unicorn and of leviathan in the same book is full of the same heightening circumstances: *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee? canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? wilt thou trust him because his strength is great?—Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?—will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?* In short, wheresoever we find strength, and in what light soever we look upon power, we shall all along observe the sublime the concomitant of terrour, and contempt the attendant on a strength that is subservient and innoxious. The race of dogs in many of their kinds, have generally a competent degree of strength and swiftness; and they exert these and other valuable qualities which they possess, greatly to our convenience and pleasure. Dogs are indeed the most social, affectionate, and amiable animals of the whole brute creation; but love approaches much nearer to contempt than is commonly imagined; and accordingly, though we caress dogs, we borrow from them an appellation of the most despicable kind, when we employ terms of reproach; and this appellation is the common mark of the last vileness and contempt in every language. Wolves have not more strength than several species of dogs; but, on account of their unmanageable fierceness, the idea of a wolf is not despicable; it is not excluded from grand descriptions and similitudes. Thus we are affected by strength, which is *natural* power. The power which arises from institution in kings and commanders, has the same connection with terrour. Sovereigns are frequently addressed with the title of *dread majesty*. And it may be observed, that young persons, little acquainted with the world, and who have not been used to approach

* Vide Part III. sect. 21.

men in power, are commonly struck with an awe which takes away the free use of their faculties. *When I prepared my seat in the street*, (says Job,) *the young men saw me, and hid themselves.* Indeed, so natural is this timidity with regard to power, and so strongly does it inhere in our constitution, that very few are able to conquer it, but by mixing much in the business of the great world, or by using no small violence to their natural dispositions. I know some people are of opinion, that no awe, no degree of terrour, accompanies the idea of power: and have hazarded to affirm, that we can contemplate the idea of God himself, without any such emotion. I purposely avoided, when I first considered this subject, to introduce the idea of that great and tremendous Being, as an example in an argument so light as this; though it frequently occurred to me, not as an objection to, but as a strong confirmation of, my notions in this matter. I hope, in what I am going to say, I shall avoid presumption, where it is almost impossible for any mortal to speak with strict propriety. I say then, that whilst we consider the Godhead merely as he is an object of the understanding, which forms a complex idea of power, wisdom, justice, goodness, all stretched to a degree far exceeding the bounds of our comprehension, whilst we consider the Divinity in this refined and abstracted light, the imagination and passions are little or nothing affected. But because we are bound, by the condition of our nature, to ascend to these pure and intellectual ideas, through the medium of sensible images, and to judge of these divine qualities by their evident acts and exertions, it becomes extremely hard to disentangle our idea of the cause from the effect by which we are led to know it. Thus when we contemplate the Deity, his attributes and their operation coming united on the mind, form a sort of sensible image, and as such are capable of affecting the imagination. Now, though in a just idea of the Deity, perhaps none of his attributes are predominant, yet to our imagination, his power is by far the most striking. Some reflection, some comparing, is necessary to satisfy us of his wisdom, his justice, and his goodness. To be struck with his power, it is only necessary that we should open our eyes. But whilst we contemplate so vast an object, under the arm, as it were, of Almighty power, and invested upon every side with omnipresence, we shrink into the minuteness of our own nature, and are, in a manner, annihilated before him. And though a consideration of his other attributes may relieve in some measure our apprehensions; yet no conviction of the justice with which it is exercised, nor the mercy with which it is tempered, can wholly remove the terrour that naturally arises from a force which nothing can withstand. If we rejoice, we rejoice with trembling: and even whilst we are receiving benefits, we cannot but shudder at a power which can confer benefits of such mighty importance. When the prophet David contemplated the wonders of wisdom and power which are displayed in the oeconomy of man, he seems to be struck with a sort of divine horrour, and cries out, *Fearfully and wonderfully am I made!* An heathen poet has a sentiment of a similar nature; Horace looks upon it as the last effort of philosophical fortitude, to behold without terrour and amazement, this immense and glorious fabric of the universe:

Hunc solem, et stellas, et decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nulla
Imbuit spectant.

Lucretius is a poet not to be suspected of giving way to superstitious terrours; yet when he supposes the whole mechanism of nature laid open by the master of his philosophy, his transport on this magnificent view, which he has represented in the colours of such bold and lively poetry, is overcast with a shade of secret dread and horrour:

His tibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas
Percipit, atque horror, quod sic Natura tua vi
Tam manifesta patet ex omni parte retecta.

But the scripture alone can supply ideas answerable to the majesty of this subject. In the scripture, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the divine presence. The psalms, and the prophetical books, are crowded with instances of this kind. *The earth shook* (says the psalmist,) *the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord.* And, what is remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is supposed descending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power, in acts of beneficence to mankind. *Tremble, thou earth! at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters!* It were endless to enumerate all the passages, both in the sacred and profane writers, which establish the general sentiment of mankind, concerning the inseparable union of a sacred and reverential awe, with our ideas of the divinity. Hence the common maxim, *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor.* This maxim may be, as I believe it is, false with

regard to the origin of religion. The maker of the maxim saw how inseparable these ideas were, without considering that the notion of some great power must be always precedent to our dread of it. But this dread must necessarily follow the idea of such a power, when it is once excited in the mind. It is on this principle that true religion has, and must have, so large a mixture of salutary fear; and that false religions have generally nothing else but fear to support them. Before the Christian religion had, as it were, humanized the idea of the Divinity, and brought it somewhat nearer to us, there was very little said of the love of God. The followers of Plato have something of it, and only something; the other writers of pagan antiquity, whether poets or philosophers, nothing at all. And they who consider with what infinite attention, by what a disregard of every perishable object, through what long habits of piety and contemplation it is, any man is able to attain an entire love and devotion to the Deity, will easily perceive, that it is not the first, the most natural, and the most striking effect which proceeds from that idea. Thus we have traced power through its several gradations unto the highest of all, where our imagination is finally lost; and we find terrour, quite throughout the progress, its inseparable companion, and growing along with it, as far as we can possibly trace them. Now as power is undoubtedly a capital source of the sublime, this will point out evidently from whence its energy is derived, and to what class of ideas we ought to unite it.

SECTION VI.

PRIVATION.

All *general* privations are great, because they are all terrible; *Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude*, and *Silence*. With what a fire of imagination, yet with what severity of judgment, has Virgil amassed all these circumstances, where he knows that all the images of a tremendous dignity ought to be united, at the mouth of hell! where, before he unlocks the secrets of the great deep, he seems to be seized with a religious horrour, and to retire astonished at the boldness of his own design:

Dii quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque
—*silentes!*
Et Chaos, et Plegethon! loca *nocte silentia* late?
Sit mihi fas audita loqui! sit numine vestro
Pandere res alta terra et *caligine* mersas!
Ibant *obscuri, sola* sub *nocte*, per *umbram*,
Perque domos Ditis *vacuas*, et *inania* regna.

Ye subterraneous gods! whose awful sway
The gliding ghosts, and *silent* shades obey;
O Chaos, hoar! and Phlegethon profound!
Whose solemn empire stretches wide around!
Give me, ye great tremendous powers, to tell
Of scenes and wonders in the depth of hell:
Give me your mighty secrets to display
From those *black* realms of darkness to the day.
Pitt.

Obscure they went through dreary *shades* that led
Along the *waste* dominions of the *dead*.
Dryden.

SECTION VII.

VASTNESS.

Greatness* of dimension is a powerful cause of the sublime. This is too evident, and the observation too common, to need any illustration; it is not so common to consider in what ways greatness of dimension, vastness of extent or quantity, has the most striking effect. For certainly, there are ways, and modes, wherein the same quantity of extension shall produce greater effects than it is found to do in others. Extension is either in length, height, or depth. Of these the length strikes least; an hundred yards of even ground will never work such an effect as a tower an hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude. I am apt to imagine likewise, that height is less grand than depth; and that we are more struck at looking down from a precipice, than looking up at an object of equal height; but of that I am not very positive. A perpendicular has more force in forming the sublime than an inclined plane; and the effects of a rugged and broken surface seem stronger than where it is smooth and polished. It would carry us out of our way to enter in this place into the cause of these appearances; but certain it is they afford a large and fruitful field of speculation. However, it may not be amiss to add to these remarks upon magnitude, that as the great extreme of dimension is sublime, so the last extreme of littleness is in some measure sublime likewise; when we attend to the infinite divisibility of matter, when we pursue animal life into these excessively small, and yet organised beings, that escape the nicest inquisition of the sense, when we push our discoveries yet downward, and consider those creatures so many degrees yet smaller, and the

* Part IV. sect. 9.

still diminishing scale of existence, in tracing which the imagination is lost as well as the sense, we become amazed and confounded at the wonders of minuteness; nor can we distinguish in its effect this extreme of littleness from the vast itself. For division must be infinite as well as addition; because the idea of a perfect unity can no more be arrived at, than that of a complete whole, to which nothing may be added.

SECTION VIII.

INFINITY.

Another source of the sublime is *infinity*; if it does not rather belong to the last. Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horrour, which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime. There are scarce any things which can become the objects of our senses, that are really and in their own nature infinite. But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effects as if they were really so. We are deceived in the like manner, if the parts of some large object are so continued to any indefinite number, that the imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending them at pleasure.

Whenever we repeat any idea frequently, the mind, by a sort of mechanism, repeats it long after the first cause has ceased to operate.* After whirling about, when we sit down, the objects about us still seem to whirl. After a long succession of noises, as the fall of waters, or the beating of forge hammers, the hammers beat and the water roars in the imagination long after the first sounds have ceased to affect it; and they die away at last by gradations which are scarcely perceptible. If you hold up a straight pole, with your eye to one end, it will seem extended to a length almost incredible.† Place a number of uniform and equidistant marks on this pole, they will cause the same deception, and seem multiplied without end. The senses, strongly affected in some one manner, cannot quickly change their tenour or adapt themselves to other things; but they continue in their old channel until the strength of the first mover decays. This is the reason of an appearance very frequent in madmen; that they remain whole days and nights, sometimes whole years, in the constant repetition of some remark, some complaint, or song; which having struck powerfully on their disordered imagination in the beginning of their phrenzy, every repetition reinforces it with new strength; and the hurry of their spirits unrestrained by the curb of reason, continues it to the end of their lives.

* Part IV. sect. 12. † Part IV. sect. 14.

SECTION IX.

SUCCESSION AND UNIFORMITY.

Succession and *uniformity* of parts are what constitute the artificial infinite. 1. *Succession*; which is requisite that the parts may be continued so long and in such a direction, as by their frequent impulses on the sense to impress the imagination with an idea of their progress beyond their actual limits. 2. *Uniformity*; because if the figures of the parts should be changed, the imagination at every change finds a check; you are presented at every alteration with the termination of one idea, and the beginning of another; by which means it becomes impossible to continue that uninterrupted progression, which alone can stamp on bounded objects the character of infinity.‡ It is in this kind of artificial infinity, I believe, we ought to look for the cause why a rotund has such a noble effect. For in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can no where fix a boundary; turn which way you will, the same object still seems to continue, and the imagination has no rest. But the parts must be uniform, as well as circularly disposed, to give this figure its full force; because any difference, whether it be in the disposition, or in the figure, or even in the colour of the parts, is highly prejudicial to the idea of infinity, which every change must check and interrupt, at every alteration commencing a new series. On the same principles of succession and uniformity, the grand appearance of the ancient heathen temples, which were generally oblong forms, with a range of uniform pillars on every side, will be easily accounted for. From the same cause also may be derived the grand effect of the aisles in many of our own old cathedrals. The form of a cross used in some churches seems to me not so eligible as the parallelogram of the ancients; at least, I imagine it is not so

‡ Mr. Addison, in the Spectators concerning the pleasures of the imagination, thinks it is because in the rotund at one glance you see half the building. This I do not imagine to be the real cause.

proper for the outside. For, supposing the arms of the cross every way equal, if you stand in a direction parallel to any of the side walls, or colonnades, instead of a deception that makes the building more extended than it is, you are cut off from a considerable part (two thirds) of its *actual* length; and to prevent all possibility of progression, the arms of the cross taking a new direction, make a right angle with the beam, and thereby wholly turn the imagination from the repetition of the former idea. Or suppose the spectator placed where he may take a direct view of such a building, what will be the consequence? the necessary consequence will be, that a good part of the basis of each angle formed by the intersection of the arms of the cross, must be inevitably lost; the whole must of course assume a broken unconnected figure; the lights must be unequal, here strong, and there weak; without that noble gradation, which the perspective always effects on parts disposed uninterruptedly in a right line. Some or all of these objections will lie against every figure of a cross, in whatever view you take it. I exemplified them in the Greek cross, in which these faults appear the most strongly; but they appear in some degree in all sorts of crosses. Indeed there is nothing more prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings, than to abound in angles; a fault obvious in many; and owing to an inordinate thirst for variety, which, whenever it prevails, is sure to leave very little true taste.

SECTION X.

MAGNITUDE IN BUILDING.

To the sublime in building, greatness of dimension seems requisite; for on a few parts, and those small, the imagination cannot rise to any idea of infinity. No greatness in the manner can effectually compensate for the want of proper dimensions. There is no danger of drawing men into extravagant designs by this rule; it carries its own caution along with it. Because too great a length in buildings destroys the purpose of greatness, which it was intended to promote; the perspective will lessen it in height as it gains in length; and will bring it at last to a point; turning the whole figure into a sort of triangle, the poorest in its effect of almost any figure that can be presented to the eye. I have ever observed, that colonnades and avenues of trees of a moderate length, were without comparison far grander, than when they were suffered to run to immense distances. A true artist should put a generous deceit on the spectators, and effect the noblest designs by easy methods. Designs that are vast only by their dimensions, are always the sign of a common and low imagination. No work of art can be great, but as it deceives; to be otherwise is the prerogative of nature only. A good eye will fix the medium betwixt an excessive length or height, (for the same objection lies against both,) and a short or broken quantity: and perhaps it might be ascertained to a tolerable degree of exactness, if it was my purpose to descend far into the particulars of any art.

SECTION XI.

INFINITY IN PLEASING OBJECTS.

Infinity, though of another kind, causes much of our pleasure in agreeable, as well as of our delight in sublime images. The spring is the pleasantest of the seasons; and the young of most animals, though far from being completely fashioned, afford a more agreeable sensation than the full grown; because the imagination is entertained with the promise of something more, and does not acquiesce in the present object of the sense. In unfinished sketches of drawing, I have often seen something which pleased me beyond the best finishing; and this I believe proceeds from the cause I have just now assigned.

SECTION XII.

DIFFICULTY.

Another* source of greatness is *difficulty*. When any work seems to have required immense force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand. Stonehenge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has any thing admirable; but those huge rude masses of stone, set on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immense force necessary for such a work. Nay, the rudeness of the work increases this cause of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art and contrivance; for dexterity produces another sort of effect, which is different enough from this.

* Part IV. sect. 4, 5, 6.

SECTION XIII.

MAGNIFICENCE.

MAGNIFICENCE is likewise a source of the sublime. A great profusion of things, which are splendid or valuable in themselves, is *magnificent*. The starry heaven, though it occurs so very frequently to our view, never fails to excite an idea of grandeur. This cannot be owing to the stars themselves, separately considered. The number is certainly the cause. The apparent disorder augments the grandeur, for the appearance of care is highly contrary to our ideas of magnificence. Besides, the stars lie in such apparent confusion, as makes it impossible on ordinary occasions to reckon them. This gives them the advantage of a sort of infinity. In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which consists in multitude, is to be very cautiously admitted; because a profusion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and because in many cases this splendid confusion would destroy all use, which should be attended to in most of the works of art with the greatest care; besides it is to be considered, that unless you can produce an appearance of infinity by your disorder, you will have disorder only without magnificence. There are, however, a sort of fire-works, and some other things, that in this way succeed well, and are truly grand. There are also many descriptions in the poets and orators, which owe their sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled as to make it impossible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the allusions, which we should require on every other occasion. I do not now remember a more striking example of this, than the description which is given of the king's army in the play of Henry the Fourth:

——————All furnish'd, all in arms,
All plum'd like ostriches that with the wind
Baited like eagles having lately bathed:
As full of spirit as the month of May,
And gorgeous as the sun in midsummer,
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls
I saw young Harry with his beaver on
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury;
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropped from the clouds
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus.

In that excellent book, so remarkable for the vivacity of its descriptions, as well as the solidity and penetration of its sentences, the Wisdom of the son of Sirach, there is a noble panegyric on the high priest Simon the son of Onias; and it is a very fine example of the point before us:

How was he honoured in the midst of the people, in his coming out of the sanctuary! He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full; as the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds: and as the flower of roses in the spring of the year, as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the frankincense tree in summer; as fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel of gold set with precious stones; as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and as a cypress which groweth up to the clouds. When he put on the robe of honour, and was clothed with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable. He himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his brethren round about; as a young cedar in Libanus, and as palm trees compassed they him about. So were all the sons of Aaron in their glory, and the oblations of the Lord in their hands, &c.

SECTION XIV.

LIGHT.

HAVING considered extension, so far as it is capable of raising ideas of greatness; *colour* comes next under consideration. All colours depend on *light*. Light therefore ought previously to be examined; and with it its opposite, darkness. With regard to light, to make it a cause capable of producing the sublime, it must be attended with some circumstances, besides its bare faculty of shewing other objects. Mere light is too common a thing to make a strong impression on the mind, and without a strong impression nothing can be sublime. But such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the sense, is a very great idea. Light of an inferior strength to this, if it moves with great celerity, has the same power; for lightning is certainly productive of grandeur, which it owes chiefly to the extreme velocity of its motion. A quick transition from light to darkness, or from darkness to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light. Our great poet was convinced of this; and indeed so full was he of this idea, so entirely possessed with the power of a well managed darkness, that in describing the appearance of the Deity, amidst that profusion of magnificent images, which the grandeur of his subject provokes him to pour out upon every side, he is far from forget-

ting the obscurity which surrounds the most incomprehensible of all beings, but

———With the majesty of *darkness* round
Circles his throne.———

And what is no less remarkable, our author had the secret of preserving this idea, even when he seemed to depart the farthest from it, when he describes the light and glory which flows from the divine presence; a light which by its very excess is converted into a species of darkness.

Dark with excessive light thy skirts appear.

Here is an idea not only poetical in an high degree, but strictly and philosophically just. Extreme light, by overcoming the organs of sight, obliterates all objects, so as in its effect exactly to resemble darkness. After looking for some time at the sun, two black spots, the impression which it leaves, seem to dance before our eyes. Thus are two ideas as opposite as can be imagined reconciled in the extremes of both; and both in spite of their opposite nature, brought to concur in producing the sublime. And this is not the only instance wherein the opposite extremes operate equally in favour of the sublime, which in all things abhors mediocrity.

SECTION XV.

LIGHT IN BUILDING.

As the management of light is a matter of importance in architecture, it is worth inquiring, how far this remark is applicable to building. I think then, that all edifices calculated to produce an idea of the sublime, ought rather to be dark and gloomy, and this for two reasons; the first is, that darkness itself on other occasions is known by experience to have a greater effect on the passions than light. The second is, that to make an object very striking, we should make it as different as possible from the objects with which we have been immediately conversant; when therefore you enter a building, you cannot pass into a greater light than you had in the open air; to go into some few degrees less luminous, can make only a trifling change; but to make the transition thoroughly striking, you ought to pass from the greatest light, to as much darkness as is consistent with the uses of architecture. At night the contrary rule will hold, but for the very same reason; and the more highly a room is then illuminated, the grander will the passion be.

SECTION XVI.

COLOUR CONSIDERED AS PRODUCTIVE OF THE SUBLIME.

Among colours, such as are soft or cheerful (except perhaps a strong red which is cheerful) are unfit to produce grand images. An immense mountain covered with a shining green turf, is nothing, in this respect, to one dark and gloomy; the cloudy sky is more grand than the blue; and night more sublime and solemn than day. Therefore in historical painting, a gay or gaudy drapery can never have a happy effect: and in buildings, when the highest degree of the sublime is intended, the materials and ornaments ought neither to be white, nor green, nor yellow, nor blue, nor of a pale red, nor violet, nor spotted, but of sad and fuscous colours, as black, or brown, or deep purple, and the like. Much of gilding, mosaics, painting, or statues, contribute but little to the sublime. This rule need not be put in practice, except where an uniform degree of the most striking sublimity is to be produced, and that in every particular; for it ought to be observed, that this melancholy kind of greatness, though it be certainly the highest, ought not to be studied in all sorts of edifices, where yet grandeur must be studied: in such cases the sublimity must be drawn from the other sources; with a strict caution however against any thing light and riant; as nothing so effectually deadens the whole taste of the sublime.

SECTION XVII.

SOUND AND LOUDNESS.

The eye is not the only organ of sensation, by which a sublime passion may be produced. Sounds have a great power in these as in most other passions. I do not mean words, because words do not affect simply by their sounds, but by means altogether different. Excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terrour. The noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and awful sensation in the mind, though we can observe no nicety or artifice in those sorts of music. The shouting of multitudes has a similar effect; and, by the sole strength of the sound, so amazes and confounds the imagination, that, in this staggering and hurry of the mind, the best established tempers can

scarcely forbear being borne down, and joining in the common cry, and common resolution of the crowd.

SECTION XVIII.

SUDDENNESS.

A SUDDEN beginning, or sudden cessation of sound of any considerable force, has the same power. The attention is roused by this; and the faculties driven forward, as it were, on their guard. Whatever either in sights or sounds makes the transition from one extreme to the other easy, causes no terrour, and consequently can be no cause of greatness. In every thing sudden and unexpected, we are apt to start; that is, we have a perception of danger, and our nature rouses us to guard against it. It may be observed that a single sound of some strength, though but of short duration, if repeated after intervals, has a grand effect. Few things are more awful than the striking of a great clock, when the silence of the night prevents the attention from being too much dissipated. The same may be said of a single stroke on a drum, repeated with pauses; and of the successive firing of cannon at a distance. All the effects mentioned in this section have causes very nearly alike.

SECTION XIX.

INTERMITTING.

A LOW, tremulous, intermitting sound, though it seems in some respects opposite to that just mentioned, is productive of the sublime. It is worth while to examine this a little. The fact itself must be determined by every man's own experience and reflection. I have already observed,* that night increases our terrour, more perhaps than any thing else; it is our nature, when we do not know what may happen to us, to fear the worst that can happen; and hence it is, that uncertainty is so terrible, that we often seek to be rid of it, at the hazard of a certain mischief. Now, some low, confused, uncertain sounds, leave us in the same fearful anxiety concerning their causes, that no light, or an uncertain light, does, concerning the objects that surround us.

* Section 3.

Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
Est iter in sylvis.———

———A faint shadow of uncertain light,
Like as a lamp, whose life doth fade away;
Or as the moon clothed with cloudy night
Doth shew to him who walks in fear and great affright. SPENSER.

But light now appearing, and now leaving us, and so off and on, is even more terrible than total darkness: and a sort of uncertain sounds are, when the necessary dispositions concur, more alarming than a total silence.

SECTION XX.

THE CRIES OF ANIMALS.

SUCH sounds as imitate the natural inarticulate voices of men, or any animals in pain or danger, are capable of conveying great ideas; unless it be the well-known voice of some creature, on which we are used to look with contempt. The angry tones of wild beasts are equally capable of causing a great and awful sensation.

Hinc exaudiri gemitus, iraque leonum
Vincla recusantum, et sera sub nocte rudentum;
Setigerique sues, atque in præsepibus ursi
Sævire; et formæ magnorum ululare luporum.

It might seem that these modulations of sound carry some connection with the nature of the things they represent, and are not merely arbitrary; because the natural cries of all animals, even of those animals with whom we have not been acquainted, never fail to make themselves sufficiently understood; this cannot be said of language. The modifications of sound, which may be productive of the sublime, are almost infinite. Those I have mentioned, are only a few instances to shew, on what principles they are all built.

SECTION XXI.

SMELL AND TASTE. BITTERS AND STENCHES.

SMELLS and tastes, have some share too in ideas of greatness; but it is a small one, weak in its nature, and confined in its operations. I shall only observe, that no smells or tastes can produce a grand sensation, except excessive bitters, and intolerable stenches. It is true, that these affections of the smell and taste, when they are in their full force, and lean di-

rectly upon the sensory, are simply painful, and accompanied with no sort of delight; but when they are moderated, as in a description or narrative, they become sources of the sublime, as genuine as any other, and upon the very same principle of a moderated pain. "A cup of bitterness;" "to drain the bitter cup of fortune;" "the bitter apples of Sodom;" these are all ideas suitable to a sublime description. Nor is this passage of Virgil without sublimity, where the stench of the vapour in Albuena conspires so happily with the sacred horrour and gloominess of that prophetic forest:

At rex solicitus monstris oracula Fauni
Fatidici genitoris adit, lucosque sub alta
Consulit Albunea, nemorum quæ maxima sacro
Fonte sonat; *sævamque exhalat opaca Mephitim.*

In the sixth book, and in a very sublime description, the poisonous exhalation of Acheron is not forgot, nor does it at all disagree with the other images among which it is introduced:

Spelunca *alta* fuit, *vastoque immanis* hiatu
Scrupea, tuta *lacu nigro*, nemorumque *tenebris*,
Quam super haud ullæ poterant impune volantes
Tendere iter pennis, *talis sese halitus atris*
Faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat.

I have added these examples, because some friends, for whose judgment I have great deference, were of opinion, that if the sentiment stood nakedly by itself, it would be subject, at first view, to burlesque and ridicule; but this I imagine would principally arise from considering the bitterness and stench in company with mean and contemptible ideas, with which it must be owned they are often united; such an union degrades the sublime in all other instances as well as in those. But it is one of the tests by which the sublimity of an image is to be tried, not whether it becomes mean when associated with mean ideas: but whether, when united with images of an allowed grandeur, the whole composition is supported with dignity. Things which are terrible are always great; but when things possess disagreeable qualities, or such as have indeed some degree of danger, but of a danger easily overcome, they are merely *odious*, as toads and spiders.

SECTION XXII.

FEELING. PAIN.

Of *feeling*, little more can be said than that the idea of bodily pain, in all the modes and degrees of labour, pain, anguish, torment, is productive of the sublime; and nothing else in this sense can produce it. I need not give here any fresh instances, as those given in the former sections abundantly illustrate a remark, that in reality wants only an attention to nature, to be made by every body.

Having thus run through the causes of the sublime with reference to all the senses, my first observation (sect. 7.) will be found very nearly true; that the sublime is an idea belonging to self-preservation; that it is therefore one of the most affecting we have; that its strongest emotion is an emotion of distress; and that no pleasure* from a positive cause belongs to it. Numberless examples, besides those mentioned, might be brought in support of these truths, and many perhaps useful consequences drawn from them—

Sed fugit interea, fugit irrevocabile tempus,
Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.

THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

PART III.—SECTION I.

OF BEAUTY.

It is my design to consider beauty as distinguished from the sublime; and, in the course of the inquiry, to examine how far it is consistent with it. But previous to this, we must take a short review of the opinions already entertained of this quality; which I think are hardly to be reduced to any fixed principles; because men are used to talk of beauty in a figurative manner, that is to say, in a manner extremely uncertain, and indeterminate. By beauty I mean that quality, or those qualities in bodies, by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it. I confine this definition to the merely sensible qualities of things, for the sake of preserving the utmost simplicity in a subject which must always distract us, whenever we take in those various causes of sympathy which attach us to any persons or things from secondary considerations, and not from the direct force which they have merely on being viewed. I likewise distinguish love, by which I mean that satisfaction which arises to the mind upon contemplating any thing beautiful, of whatsoever nature it may be, from desire or lust; which is an energy of the mind, that hurries us on to the possession of certain objects, that do not affect us as they are beau-

* Vide Part I. sect. 6.

tiful, but by means altogether different. We shall have a strong desire for a woman of no remarkable beauty; whilst the greatest beauty in men, or in other animals, though it causes love, yet it excites nothing at all of desire. Which shews that beauty, and the passion caused by beauty, which I call love, is different from desire, though desire may sometimes operate along with it; but it is to this latter that we must attribute those violent and tempestuous passions, and the consequent emotions of the body which attend what is called love in some of its ordinary acceptations, and not to the effects of beauty merely as it is such.

SECTION II.

PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN VEGETABLES.

Beauty hath usually been said to consist in certain proportions of parts. On considering the matter, I have great reason to doubt, whether beauty be at all an idea belonging to proportion. Proportion relates almost wholly to convenience, as every idea of order seems to do; and it must therefore be considered as a creature of the understanding, rather than a primary cause acting on the senses and imagination. It is not by the force of long attention and inquiry that we find any object to be beautiful; beauty demands no assistance from our reasoning; even the will is unconcerned; the appearance of beauty as effectually causes some degree of love in us, as the application of ice or fire produces the ideas of heat or cold. To gain something like a satisfactory conclusion in this point, it were well to examine, what proportion is; since several who make use of that word, do not always seem to understand very clearly the force of the term, nor to have very distinct ideas concerning the thing itself. Proportion is the measure of relative quantity. Since all quantity is divisible, it is evident that every distinct part into which any quantity is divided, must bear some relation to the other parts, or to the whole. These relations give an origin to the idea of proportion. They are discovered by mensuration, and they are the objects of mathematical inquiry. But whether any part of any determinate quantity be a fourth, or a fifth, or a sixth, or a moiety of the whole; or whether it be of equal length with any other part, or double its length, or but one half, is a matter merely indifferent to the mind; it stands neuter in the question: and it is from this absolute indifference and tranquillity of the mind, that mathematical speculations derive some of their most considerable advantages; because there is nothing to interest the imagination; because the judgment sits free and unbiassed to examine the point. All proportions, every arrangement of quantity is alike to the understanding, because the same truths result to it from all; from greater, from lesser, from equality and inequality. But surely beauty is no idea belonging to mensuration; nor has it any thing to do with calculation and geometry. If it had, we might then point out some certain measures which we could demonstrate to be beautiful, either as simply considered, or as related to others; and we could call in those natural objects, for whose beauty we have no voucher but the sense, to this happy standard, and confirm the voice of our passions by the determination of our reason. But since we have not this help, let us see whether proportion can in any sense be considered as the cause of beauty, as hath been so generally, and by some so confidently affirmed. If proportion be one of the constituents of beauty, it must derive that power either from some natural properties inherent in certain measures, which operate mechanically; from the operation of custom; or from the fitness which some measures have to answer some particular ends of conveniency. Our business therefore is to enquire, whether the parts of those objects, which are found beautiful in the vegetable or animal kingdoms, are constantly so formed according to such certain measures, as may serve to satisfy us that their beauty results from those measures on the principle of a natural mechanical cause; or from custom; or, in fine, from their fitness for any determinate purposes. I intend to examine this point under each of these heads in their order. But before I proceed further, I hope it will not be thought amiss, if I lay down the rules which governed me in this inquiry, and which have misled me in it, if I have gone astray. 1. If two bodies produce the same or a similar effect on the mind, and on examination they are found to agree in some of their properties, and to differ in others; the common effect is to be attributed to the properties in which they agree, and not to those in which they differ. 2. Not to account for the effect of a natural object from the effect of an artificial object. 3. Not to account for the effect of any natural object from a conclusion of our reason concerning its uses, if a natural cause may be assigned. 4. Not to admit any determinate quantity, or any relation of quantity, as the

cause of a certain effect, if the effect is produced by different or opposite measures and relations; or if these measures and relations may exist, and yet the effect may not be produced. These are the rules which I have chiefly followed, whilst I examined into the power of proportion considered as a natural cause; and these, if he thinks them just, I request the reader to carry with him throughout the following discussion; whilst we enquire in the first place, in what things we find this quality of beauty: next, to see whether in these we can find any assignable proportions, in such a manner as ought to convince us that our idea of beauty results from them. We shall consider this pleasing power, as it appears in vegetables, in the inferiour animals, and in man. Turning our eyes to the vegetable creation, we find nothing there so beautiful as flowers; but flowers are almost of every sort of shape, and of every sort of disposition; they are turned and fashioned into an infinite variety of forms; and from these forms botanists have given them their names, which are almost as various. What proportion do we discover between the stalks and the leaves of flowers, or between the leaves and the pistils? How does the slender stalk of the rose agree with the bulky head under which it bends? but the rose is a beautiful flower; and can we undertake to say that it does not owe a great deal of its beauty even to that disproportion; the rose is a large flower, yet it grows upon a small shrub; the flower of the apple is very small, and grows upon a large tree; yet the rose and the apple blossom are both beautiful, and the plants that bear them are most engagingly attired, notwithstanding this disproportion. What by general consent is allowed to be a more beautiful object than an orange tree, flourishing at once with its leaves, its blossoms, and its fruit? but it is in vain that we search here for any proportion between the height, the breadth, or any thing else concerning the dimensions of the whole, or concerning the relation of the particular parts to each other. I grant that we may observe in many flowers, something of a regular figure, and of a methodical disposition of the leaves. The rose has such a figure and such a disposition of its petals; but in an oblique view, when this figure is in a good measure lost, and the order of the leaves confounded, it yet retains its beauty; the rose is even more beautiful before it is full blown; and the bud, before this exact figure is formed; and this is not the only instance wherein method and exactness, the soul of proportion, are found rather prejudicial than serviceable to the cause of beauty.

SECTION III.

PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN ANIMALS.

THAT proportion has but a small share in the formation of beauty, is full as evident among animals. Here the greatest variety of shapes and dispositions of parts, are well fitted to excite this idea. The swan, confessedly a beautiful bird, has a neck longer than the rest of his body, and but a very short tail: is this a beautiful proportion? we must allow that it is. But then what shall we say to the peacock, who has comparatively but a short neck, with a tail longer than the neck and the rest of the body taken together? How many birds are there that vary infinitely from each of these standards, and from every other which you can fix; with proportions different, and often directly opposite to each other! and yet many of these birds are extremely beautiful; when upon considering them we find nothing in any one part that might determine us *à priori*, to say what the others ought to be, nor indeed to guess any thing about them, but what experience might shew to be full of disappointment and mistake. And with regard to the colours either of birds or flowers, for there is something similar in the colouring of both, whether they are considered in their extension or gradation, there is nothing of proportion to be observed. Some are of but one single colour; others have all the colours of the rainbow; some are of the primary colours, others are of the mixt; in short, an attentive observer may soon conclude, that there is as little of proportion in the colouring as in the shapes of these objects. Turn next to beasts; examine the head of a beautiful horse; find what proportion that bears to his body, and to his limbs, and what relations these have to each other; and when you have settled these proportions as a standard of beauty, then take a dog or cat, or any other animal, and examine how far the same proportions between their heads and their necks, between those and the body, and so on, are found to hold; I think we may safely say, that they differ in every species, yet that there are individuals found in a great many species so differing, that have a very striking beauty. Now, if it be allowed that very different, and even contrary, forms and dispositions are consistent with beauty, it amounts I believe to a concession, that no certain measures, operating from a natural principle, are necessary to produce it, at least so far as the brute species is concerned.

SECTION IV.

PROPORTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY IN THE HUMAN SPECIES.

THERE are some parts of the human body, that are observed to hold certain proportions to each other; but before it can be proved, that the efficient cause of beauty lies in these, it must be shewn, that wherever these are found exact, the person to whom they belong is beautiful: I mean in the effect produced on the view, either of any member distinctly considered, or of the whole body together. It must be likewise shewn, that these parts stand in such a relation to each other, that the comparison between them may be easily made, and that the affection of the mind may naturally result from it. For my part, I have at several times very carefully examined many of those proportions, and found them hold very nearly, or altogether alike in many subjects, which were not only very different from one another, but where one has been very beautiful, and the other very remote from beauty. With regard to the parts which are found so proportioned, they are often so remote from each other, in situation, nature, and office, that I cannot see how they admit of any comparison, nor consequently how any effect owing to proportion can result from them. The neck, say they in beautiful bodies, should measure with the calf of the leg; it should likewise be twice the circumference of the wrist. And an infinity of observations of this kind are to be found in the writings and conversations of many. But what relation has the calf of the leg to the neck; or either of these parts to the wrist? These proportions are certainly to be found in handsome bodies. They are as certainly in ugly ones; as any who will take the pains to try may find. Nay, I do not know but they may be least perfect in some of the most beautiful. You may assign any proportions you please to every part of the human body; and I undertake that a painter shall religiously observe them all, and notwithstanding produce, if he pleases, a very ugly figure. The same painter shall considerably deviate from these proportions, and produce a very beautiful one. And indeed it may be observed in the master-pieces of the ancient and modern statuary, that several of them differ very widely from the proportions of others, in parts very conspicuous and of great consideration; and that they differ no less from the proportions we find in living men, of forms extremely striking and agreeable. And after all, how are the partisans of proportional beauty agreed among themselves about the proportions of the human body? some hold it to be seven heads; some make it eight; whilst others extend it even to ten; a vast difference in such a small number of divisions! Others take other methods of estimating the proportions, and all with equal success. But are these proportions exactly the same in all handsome men? or are they at all the proportions found in beautiful women? nobody will say that they are; yet both sexes are undoubtedly capable of beauty, and the female of the greatest; which advantage I believe will hardly be attributed to the superiour exactness of proportion in the fair sex. Let us rest a moment on this point; and consider how much difference there is between the measures that prevail in many similar parts of the body, in the two sexes of this single species only. If you assign any determinate proportions to the limbs of a man, and if you limit human beauty to these proportions, when you find a woman who differs in the make and measures of almost every part, you must conclude her not to be beautiful, in spite of the suggestions of your imagination; or, in obedience to your imagination, you must renounce your rules; you must lay by the scale and compass, and look out for some other cause of beauty. For if beauty be attached to certain measures which operate from a *principle in nature*, why should similar parts with different measures of proportion be found to have beauty, and this too in the very same species? but to open our view a little, it is worth observing, that almost all animals have parts of very much the same nature, and destined nearly to the same purposes? an head, neck, body, feet, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; yet Providence, to provide in the best manner for their several wants, and to display the riches of his wisdom and goodness in his creation, has worked out of these few and similar organs, and members, a diversity hardly short of infinite in their disposition, measures, and relation. But, as we have before observed, amidst this infinite diversity, one particular is common to many species: several of the individuals which compose them are capable of affecting us with a sense of loveliness; and whilst they agree in producing this effect, they differ extremely in the relative measures of those parts which have produced it. These considerations were sufficient to induce me to reject the notion of any particular proportions that operated by nature to produce a pleasing effect; but those who will agree with me with regard to a particular proportion, are strongly prepossessed in favour of one more indefinite. They imagine, that although beauty in general

is annexed to no certain measures common to the several kinds of pleasing plants and animals; yet that there is a certain proportion in each species absolutely essential to the beauty of that particular kind. If we consider the animal world in general, we find beauty confined to no certain measures; but as some peculiar measure and relation of parts is what distinguishes each peculiar class of animals, it must of necessity be, that the beautiful in each kind will be found in the measures and proportions of that kind; for otherwise it would deviate from its proper species, and become in some sort monstrous: however, no species is so strictly confined to any certain proportions, that there is not a considerable variation among the individuals; and as it has been shewn of the human, so it may be shewn of the brute kinds, that beauty is found indifferently in all the proportions which each kind can admit, without quitting its common form; and it is this idea of a common form that makes the proportion of parts at all regarded, and not the operation of any natural cause: indeed a little consideration will make it appear, that it is not measure but manner that creates all the beauty which belongs to shape. What light do we borrow from these boasted proportions, when we study ornamental design? It seems amazing to me, that artists, if they were as well convinced as they pretend to be, that proportion is a principal cause of beauty, have not by them at all times accurate measurements of all sorts of beautiful animals to help them to proper proportions, when they would contrive any thing elegant, especially as they frequently assert, that it is from an observation of the beautiful in nature they direct their practice. I know that it has been said long since, and echoed backward and forward from one writer to another a thousand times, that the proportions of building have been taken from those of the human body. To make this forced analogy complete, they represent a man with his arms raised and extended at full length, and then describe a sort of square, as it is formed by passing lines along the extremities of this strange figure. But it appears very clearly to me, that the human figure never supplied the architect with any of his ideas. For in the first place, men are very rarely seen in this strained posture; it is not natural to them; neither is it at all becoming. Secondly, the view of the human figure so disposed, does not naturally suggest the idea of a square, but rather of a cross; as that large space between the arms and the ground, must be filled with something before it can make any body think of a square. Thirdly, several buildings are by no means of the form of that particular square, which are notwithstanding planned by the best architects, and produce an effect altogether as good, and perhaps a better. And certainly nothing could be more unaccountably whimsical, than for an architect to model his performance by the human figure, since no two things can have less resemblance or analogy, than a man, and an house or temple: do we need to observe, that their purposes are entirely different? What I am apt to suspect is this: that these analogies were devised to give a credit to the works of art, by shewing a conformity between them and the noblest works in nature; not that the latter served at all to supply hints for the perfection of the former. And I am the more fully convinced, that the patrons of proportion have transferred their artificial ideas to nature, and not borrowed from thence the proportions they use in works of art; because in any discussion of this subject they always quit as soon as possible the open field of natural beauties, the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and fortify themselves within the artificial lines and angles of architecture. For there is in mankind an unfortunate propensity to make themselves, their views, and their works, the measure of excellence in every thing whatsoever. Therefore having observed that their dwellings were most commodious and firm when they were thrown into regular figures, with parts answerable to each other; they transferred these ideas to their gardens; they turned their trees into pillars, pyramids, and obelisks; they formed their hedges into so many green walls, and fashioned their walks into squares, triangles, and other mathematical figures, with exactness and symmetry; and they thought, if they were not imitating, they were at least improving nature, and teaching her to know her business. But nature has at last escaped from their discipline and their fetters; and our gardens, if nothing else, declare, we begin to feel that mathematical ideas are not the true measures of beauty. And surely they are full as little so in the animal, as in the vegetable world. For is it not extraordinary, that in these fine descriptive pieces, these innumerable odes and elegies which are in the mouths of all the world, and many of which have been the entertainment of ages, that in these pieces which describe love with such a passionate energy, and represent its object in such an infinite variety of lights, not one word is said of proportion, if it be, what some insist it is, the principal component of beauty; whilst at the same time, several other qualities are very frequently and

warmly mentioned? But if proportion has not this power, it may appear odd how men came originally to be so prepossessed in its favour. It arose, I imagine, from the fondness I have just mentioned, which men bear so remarkably to their own works and notions; it arose from false reasonings on the effects of the customary figure of animals; it arose from the Platonic theory of fitness and aptitude. For which reason, in the next section, I shall consider the effects of custom in the figure of animals; and afterwards the idea of fitness: since if proportion does not operate by a natural power attending some measures, it must be either by custom, or the idea of utility; there is no other way.

SECTION V.

PROPORTION FURTHER CONSIDERED.

If I am not mistaken, a great deal of the prejudice in favour of proportion has arisen, not so much from the observation of any certain measures found in beautiful bodies, as from a wrong idea of the relation which deformity bears to beauty, to which it has been considered as the opposite; on this principle it was concluded, that where the causes of deformity were removed, beauty must naturally and necessarily be introduced. This I believe is a mistake. For *deformity* is opposed not to beauty, but to the *complete, common form*. If one of the legs of a man be found shorter than the other, the man is deformed; because there is something wanting to complete the whole idea we form of a man; and this has the same effect in natural faults, as maiming and mutilation produce from accidents. So if the back be humped, the man is deformed; because his back has an unusual figure, and what carries with it the idea of some disease or misfortune; so if a man's neck be considerably longer or shorter than usual, we say he is deformed in that part, because men are not commonly made in that manner. But surely every hour's experience may convince us, that a man may have his legs of an equal length, and resembling each other in all respects, and his neck of a just size, and his back quite straight, without having at the same time the least perceivable beauty. Indeed beauty is so far from belonging to the idea of custom, that in reality what affects us in that manner is extremely rare and uncommon. The beautiful strikes us as much by its novelty as the deformed itself. It is thus in those species of animals with which we are acquainted; and if one of a new species were represented, we should by no means wait until custom had settled an idea of proportion, before we decided concerning its beauty or ugliness: which shews that the general idea of beauty can be no more owing to customary than to natural proportion. Deformity arises from the want of the common proportions; but the necessary result of their existence in any object is not beauty. If we suppose proportion in natural things to be relative to custom and use, the nature of use and custom will shew, that beauty, which is a *positive* and powerful quality, cannot result from it. We are so wonderfully formed, that, whilst we are creatures vehemently desirous of novelty, we are as strongly attached to habit and custom. But it is the nature of things which hold us by custom, to affect us very little whilst we are in possession of them, but strongly when they are absent. I remember to have frequented a certain place, every day for a long time together; and I may truly say, that so far from finding pleasure in it, I was affected with a sort of weariness and disgust; I came, I went, I returned, without pleasure; yet if by any means I passed by the usual time of my going thither, I was remarkably uneasy, and was not quiet till I had got into my old track. They who use snuff, take it almost without being sensible that they take it, and the acute sense of smell is deadened, so as to feel hardly any thing from so sharp a stimulus; yet deprive the snuff-taker of his box, and he is the most uneasy mortal in the world. Indeed so far are use and habit from being causes of pleasure, merely as such, that the effect of constant use is to make all things of whatever kind entirely unaffecting. For as use at last takes off the painful effect of many things, it reduces the pleasurable effect in others in the same manner, and brings both to a sort of mediocrity and indifference. Very justly is use called a second nature; and our natural and common state is one of absolute indifference, equally prepared for pain or pleasure. But when we are thrown out of this state, or deprived of any thing requisite to maintain us in it; when this chance does not happen by pleasure from some mechanical cause, we are always hurt. It is so with the second nature, custom, in all things which relate to it. Thus the want of the usual proportions in men and other animals is sure to disgust, though their presence is by no means any cause of real pleasure. It is true, that the proportions laid down as causes of beauty in the human body, are frequently found in beautiful ones, because they are generally found in all mankind; but if it can be shewn too, that they are found without beauty, and that beauty fre-

quently exists without them, and that this beauty, where it exists, always can be assigned to other less equivocal causes, it will naturally lead us to conclude, that proportion and beauty are not ideas of the same nature. The true opposite to beauty is not disproportion or deformity, but *ugliness*; and as it proceeds from causes opposite to those of positive beauty, we cannot consider it until we come to treat of that. Between beauty and ugliness there is a sort of mediocrity, in which the assigned proportions are most commonly found; but this has no effect upon the passions.

SECTION VI.

FITNESS NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

It is said that the idea of utility, or of a part's being well adapted to answer its end, is the cause of beauty, or indeed beauty itself. If it were not for this opinion, it had been impossible for the doctrine of proportion to have held its ground very long; the world would be soon weary of hearing of measures which related to nothing, either of a natural principle, or of a fitness to answer some end; the idea which mankind most commonly conceive of proportion, is the suitableness of means to certain ends, and, where this is not the question, very seldom trouble themselves about the effect of different measures of things. Therefore it was necessary for this theory to insist that not only artificial, but natural objects took their beauty from the fitness of the parts for their several purposes. But in framing this theory, I am apprehensive that experience was not sufficiently consulted. For, on that principle, the wedge-like snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well adapted to its offices of digging and rooting, would be extremely beautiful. The great bag hanging to the bill of a pelican, a thing highly useful to this animal, would be likewise as beautiful in our eyes. The hedgehog, so well secured against all assaults by his prickly hide, and the porcupine with his missile quills, would be then considered as creatures of no small elegance. There are few animals whose parts are better contrived than those of a monkey; he has the hands of a man, joined to the springy limbs of a beast; he is admirably calculated for running, leaping, grappling, and climbing; and yet there are few animals which seem to have less beauty in the eyes of all mankind. I need say little on the trunk of the elephant, of such various usefulness, and which is so far from contributing to his beauty. How well fitted is the wolf for running and leaping! how admirably is the lion armed for battle! but will any one therefore call the elephant, the wolf, and the lion, beautiful animals? I believe nobody will think the form of a man's leg so well adapted to running, as those of an horse, a dog, a deer, and several other creatures; at least they have not that appearance: yet, I believe, a well-fashioned human leg will be allowable far to exceed all these in beauty. If the fitness of parts was what constituted the loveliness of their form, the actual employment of them would undoubtedly much augment it; but this, though it is sometimes so upon another principle, is far from being always the case. A bird on the wing is not so beautiful as when it is perched; nay, there are several of the domestic fowls which are seldom seen to fly, and which are nothing the less beautiful on that account; yet birds are so extremely different in their form from the beast and human kinds, that you cannot, on the principle of fitness, allow them any thing agreeable, but in consideration of their parts being designed for quite other purposes. I never in my life chanced to see a peacock fly; and yet before, very long before I considered any aptitude in his form for the aërial life, I was struck with the extreme beauty which raises that bird above many of the best flying fowls in the world; though, for any thing I saw, his way of living was much like that of the swine, which fed in the farmyard along with him. The same may be said of cocks, hens, and the like; they are of the flying kind in figure: in their manner of moving not very different from men and beasts. To leave these foreign examples; if beauty in our own species was annexed to use, men would be much more lovely than women; and strength and agility would be considered as the only beauties. But to call strength by the name of beauty, to have but one denomination for the qualities of a Venus and Hercules, so totally different in almost all respects, is surely a strange confusion of ideas, or abuse of words. The cause of this confusion, I imagine, proceeds from our frequently perceiving the parts of the human and other animal bodies to be at once very beautiful, and very well adapted to their purposes; and we are deceived by a sophism, which makes us take that for a cause which is only a concomitant: this is the sophism of the fly; who imagined he raised a great dust, because he stood upon the chariot that really raised it. The stomach, the lungs, the

liver, as well as other parts, are incomparably well adapted to their purposes; yet they are far from having any beauty. Again, many things are very beautiful, in which it is impossible to discern any idea of use. And I appeal to the first and most natural feelings of mankind, whether, on beholding a beautiful eye, or a well-fashioned mouth, or a well-turned leg, any ideas of their being well fitted for seeing, eating, or running, ever present themselves. What idea of use is it that flowers excite, the most beautiful part of the vegetable world? It is true, that the infinitely wise and good Creator has, of his bounty, frequently joined beauty to those things which he has made useful to us: but this does not prove that an idea of use and beauty are the same thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other.

SECTION VII.

THE REAL EFFECTS OF FITNESS.

When I excluded proportion and fitness from any share in beauty, I did not by any means intend to say that they were of no value, or that they ought to be disregarded in works of art. Works of art are the proper sphere of their power; and here it is that they have their full effect. Whenever the wisdom of our Creator intended that we should be affected with any thing, he did not confide the execution of his design to the languid and precarious operation of our reason; but he endued it with powers and properties that prevent the understanding, and even the will, which seizing upon the senses and imagination, captivate the soul before the understanding is ready either to join with them, or to oppose them. It is by a long deduction, and much study, that we discover the adorable wisdom of God in his works: when we discover it, the effect is very different, not only in the manner of acquiring it, but in its own nature, from that which strikes us without any preparation from the sublime or the beautiful. How different is the satisfaction of an anatomist, who discovers the use of the muscles and of the skin, the excellent contrivance of the one for the various movements of the body, and the wonderful texture of the other, at once a general covering, and at once a general outlet as well as inlet; how different is this from the affection which possesses an ordinary man at the sight of a delicate smooth skin, and all the other parts of beauty, which require no investigation to be perceived! In the former case, whilst we look up to the Maker with admiration and praise, the object which causes it may be odious and distasteful; the latter very often so touches us by its power on the imagination, that we examine but little into the artifice of its contrivance; and we have need of a strong effort of our reason to disentangle our minds from the allurements of the object, to a consideration of that wisdom which invented so powerful a machine. The effect of proportion and fitness, at least so far as they proceed from a mere consideration of the work itself, produces approbation, the acquiescence of the understanding, but not love, nor any passion of that species. When we examine the structure of a watch, when we come to know thoroughly the use of every part of it, satisfied as we are with the fitness of the whole, we are far enough from perceiving any thing like beauty in the watch-work itself; but let us look on the case, the labour of some curious artist in engraving, with little or no idea of use, we shall have a much livelier idea of beauty than we ever could have had from the watch itself, though the master-piece of Graham. In beauty, as I said, the effect is previous to any knowledge of the use; but to judge of proportion, we must know the end for which any work is designed. According to the end, the proportion varies. Thus there is one proportion of a tower, another of an house; one proportion of a gallery, another of an hall, another of a chamber.. To judge of the proportions of these, you must be first acquainted with the purposes for which they were designed. Good sense and experience acting together, find out what is fit to be done in every work of art. We are rational creatures, and in all our works we ought to regard their end and purpose; the gratification of any passion, how innocent soever, ought only to be of a secondary consideration. Herein is placed the real power of fitness and proportion; they operate on the understanding considering them, which *approves* the work and acquiesces in it. The passions, and the imagination which principally raises them, have here very little to do. When a room appears in its original nakedness, bare walls and a plain ceiling; let its proportion be ever so excellent, it pleases very little; a cold approbation is the utmost we can reach; a much worse-proportioned room with elegant mouldings and fine festoons, glasses, and other merely ornamental furniture, will make the imagination revolt against the reason; it will please much more than the naked proportion of the first room, which the understanding has so much approved, as admirably

fitted for its purposes. What I have here said and before concerning proportion, is by no means to persuade people absurdly to neglect the idea of use in the works of art. It is only to shew that these excellent things, beauty and proportion, are not the same; not that they should either of them be disregarded.

SECTION VIII.

THE RECAPITULATION.

On the whole; if such parts in human bodies as are found proportioned, were likewise constantly found beautiful, as they certainly are not; or if they were so situated, as that a pleasure might flow from the comparison, which they seldom are; or if any assignable proportions were found, either in plants or animals, which were always attended with beauty, which never was the case; or, if, where parts were well adapted to their purposes, they were constantly beautiful, and when no use appeared, there was no beauty, which is contrary to all experience; we might conclude, that beauty consisted in proportion or utility. But since, in all respects, the case is quite otherwise; we may be satisfied that beauty does not depend on these, let it owe its origin to what else it will.

SECTION IX.

PERFECTION NOT THE CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

There is another notion current, pretty closely allied to the former; that *perfection* is the constituent cause of beauty. This opinion has been made to extend much farther than to sensible subjects. But in these, so far is perfection, considered as such, from being the cause of beauty; that this quality, where it is highest, in the female sex, almost always carries with it an idea of weakness and imperfection. Women are very sensible of this; for which reason, they learn to lisp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakness, and even sickness. In all this they are guided by nature. Beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty. Blushing has little less power; and modesty in general, which is a tacit allowance of imperfection, is itself considered as an amiable quality, and certainly heightens every other that is so. I know it is in every body's mouth, that we ought to love perfection. This is to me a sufficient proof, that it is not the proper object of love. Who ever said we *ought* to love a fine woman, or even any of these beautiful animals which please us? Here to be affected, there is no need of the concurrence of our will.

SECTION X.

HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO THE QUALITIES OF THE MIND.

Nor is this remark in general less applicable to the qualities of the mind. Those virtues which cause admiration, and are of the sublimer kind, produce terrour rather than love; such as fortitude, justice, wisdom, and the like. Never was any man amiable by force of these qualities. Those which engage our hearts, which impress us with a sense of loveliness, are the softer virtues; easiness of temper, compassion, kindness, and liberality; though certainly those latter are of less immediate and momentous concern to society, and of less dignity. But it is for that reason that they are so amiable. The great virtues turn principally on dangers, punishments, and troubles, and are exercised rather in preventing the worst mischiefs, than in dispensing favours; and are therefore not lovely, though highly venerable. The subordinate turn on reliefs, gratifications, and indulgencies; and are therefore more lovely, though inferiour in dignity. Those persons who creep into the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities or strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul on which we rest our eyes that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects. It is worth observing how we feel ourselves affected in reading the characters of Cæsar and Cato, as they are so finely drawn and contrasted in Sallust. In one the *ignoscendo, largiundo;* in the other, *nil largiundo.* In one the *miseris perfugium;* in the other, *malis perniciem.* In the latter we have much to admire, much to reverence, and perhaps something to fear; we respect him, but we respect him at a distance. The former makes us familiar with him; we love him, and he leads us whither he pleases. To draw things closer to our first and most natural feelings, I will add a remark made upon reading this section by an ingenious friend. The authority of a father, so useful to our well-

being, and so justly venerable upon all accounts, hinders us from having that entire love for him that we have for our mothers, where the parental authority is almost melted down into the mother's fondness and indulgence. But we generally have a great love for our grandfathers in whom this authority is removed a degree from us, and where the weakness of age mellows it into something of a feminine partiality.

SECTION XI.

HOW FAR THE IDEA OF BEAUTY MAY BE APPLIED TO VIRTUE.

From what has been said in the foregoing section we may easily see, how far the application of beauty to virtue, may be made with propriety. The general application of this quality to virtue, has a strong tendency to confound our ideas of things; and it has given rise to an infinite deal of whimsical theory; as the affixing the name of beauty to proportion, congruity, and perfection, as well as to qualities of things yet more remote from our natural ideas of it, and from one another, has tended to confound our ideas of beauty, and left us no standard or rule to judge by, that was not even more uncertain and fallacious than our own fancies. This loose and inaccurate manner of speaking, has therefore misled us both in the theory of taste and of morals; and induced us to remove the science of our duties from their proper basis, (our reason, our relations, and our necessities,) to rest it upon foundations altogether visionary and unsubstantial.

SECTION XII.

THE REAL CAUSE OF BEAUTY.

Having endeavoured to show what beauty is not, it remains that we should examine, at least with equal attention, in what it really consists. Beauty is a thing much too affecting not to depend upon some positive qualities. And, since it is no creature of our reason, since it strikes us without any reference to use, and even where no use at all can be discerned, since the order and method of nature is generally very different from our measures and proportions, we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses. We ought therefore to consider attentively in what manner those sensible qualities are disposed, in such things as by experience we find beautiful, or which excite in us the passion of love, or some correspondent affection.

SECTION XIII.

BEAUTIFUL OBJECTS SMALL.

The most obvious point that presents itself to us in examining any object, is its extent or quantity. And what degree of extent prevails in bodies that are held beautiful, may be gathered from the usual manner of expression concerning it. I am told that, in most languages, the objects of love are spoken of under diminutive epithets. It is so in all the languages of which I have any knowledge. In Greek the *ιον* and other diminutive terms are almost always the terms of affection and tenderness. These diminutives were commonly added by the Greeks, to the names of persons with whom they conversed on the terms of friendship and familiarity. Though the Romans were a people of less quick and delicate feelings, yet they naturally slid into the lessening termination upon the same occasions. Anciently in the English language the diminishing *ling* was added to the names of persons and things that were the objects of love. Some we retain still, as *darling*, (or little dear,) and few others. But to this day, in ordinary conversation, it is usual to add the endearing name of *little* to every thing we love: the French and Italians make use of these affectionate diminutives even more than we. In the animal creation, out of our own species, it is the small we are inclined to be fond of; little birds, and some of the smaller kinds of beasts. A great beautiful thing is a manner of expression scarcely ever used; but that of a great ugly thing, is very common. There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The sublime, which is the cause of the former, always dwells on great objects, and terrible; the latter on small ones, and pleasing; we submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us; in one case we are forced, in the other we are flattered, into compliance. In short, the ideas of the sublime and the beautiful stand on foundations so different, that it is hard, I had almost said impossible, to think of reconciling them in the same subject, without considerably lessening the effect of the

one or the other upon the passions. So that, attending to their quantity, beautiful objects are comparatively small.

SECTION XIV.

SMOOTHNESS.

The next property constantly observable in such objects is *smoothness*:* a quality so essential to beauty, that I do not now recollect any thing beautiful that is not smooth. In trees and flowers, smooth leaves are beautiful; smooth slopes of earth in gardens; smooth streams in the landscape; smooth coats of birds and beasts in animal beauties; in fine women, smooth skins; and in several sorts of ornamental furniture, smooth and polished surfaces. A very considerable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality; indeed the most considerable. For take any beautiful object, and give it a broken and rugged surface, and however well formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer. Whereas, let it want ever so many of the other constituents, if it wants not this, it becomes more pleasing than almost all the others without it. This seems to me so evident, that I am a good deal surprised, that none who have handled the subject have made any mention of the quality of smoothness, in the enumeration of those that go to the forming of beauty. For indeed any ruggedness, any sudden projection, any sharp angle, is in the highest degree contrary to that idea.

SECTION XV.

GRADUAL VARIATION.

But as perfectly beautiful bodies are not composed of angular parts, so their parts never continue long in the same right line.† They vary their direction every moment, and they change under the eye by a deviation continually carrying on, but for whose beginning or end you will find it difficult to ascertain a point. The view of a beautiful bird will illustrate this observation. Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, from whence it lessens gradually until it mixes with the neck; the neck loses itself in a larger swell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreases again to the tail; the tail takes a new direction; but it soon varies its new course: it blends again with the other parts; and the line is perpetually changing, above, below, upon every side. In this description I have before me the idea of a dove; it agrees very well with most of the conditions of beauty. It is smooth and downy; its parts are (to use that expression) melted into one another; you are presented with no sudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is continually changing. Observe that part of a beautiful woman where she is perhaps the most beautiful, about the neck and breasts; the smoothness; the softness; the easy and insensible swell; the variety of the surface, which is never for the smallest space the same; the deceitful maze, through which the unsteady eye slides giddily, without knowing where to fix or whither it is carried. Is not this a demonstration of that change of surface, continual, and yet hardly perceptible at any point, which forms one of the great constituents of beauty? It gives me no small pleasure to find that I can strengthen my theory in this point, by the opinion of the very ingenious Mr. Hogarth; whose idea of the line of beauty I take in general to be extremely just. But the idea of variation, without attending so accurately to the *manner* of the variation, has led him to consider angular figures as beautiful: these figures, it is true, vary greatly; yet they vary in a sudden and broken manner; and I do not find any natural object which is angular, and at the same time beautiful. Indeed few natural objects are entirely angular. But I think those which approach the most nearly to it are the ugliest. I must add too, that, so far as I could observe of nature, though the varied line is that alone in which complete beauty is found, yet there is no particular line which is always found in the most completely beautiful, and which is therefore beautiful in preference to all other lines. At least I never could observe it.

SECTION XVI.

DELICACY.

An air of robustness and strength is very prejudicial to beauty. An appearance *of delicacy*, and even of fragility, is almost essential to it. Whoever examines the vegetable or animal creation, will find this observation to be founded in nature. It is not the oak, the ash, or the elm, or any of the robust trees of the

* Part IV. sect. 21. † Part V. sect. 22.

forest, which we consider as beautiful; they are awful and majestic; they inspire a sort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the almond, it is the jasmine, it is the vine, which we look on as vegetable beauties. It is the flowery species, so remarkable for its weakness and momentary duration, that gives us the liveliest idea of beauty and elegance. Among animals, the greyhound is more beautiful than the mastiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horse, is much more amiable than the strength and stability of some horses of war or carriage. I need here say little of the fair sex, where I believe the point will be easily allowed me. The beauty of women is considerably owing to their weakness or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it. I would not here be understood to say, that weakness betraying very bad health has any share in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not because it is weakness, but because the ill state of health which produces such weakness, alters the other conditions of beauty; the parts in such a case collapse; the bright colour, the *lumen purpureum juventæ*, is gone; and the fine variation is lost in wrinkles, sudden breaks, and right lines.

SECTION XVII.

BEAUTY IN COLOUR.

As to the colours usually found in beautiful bodies, it may be somewhat difficult to ascertain them, because, in the several parts of nature, there is an infinite variety. However, even in this variety, we may mark out something on which to settle. First, the colours of beautiful bodies must not be dusky or muddy, but clean and fair. Secondly, they must not be of the strongest kind. Those which seem most appropriated to beauty, are the milder of every sort; light greens; soft blues; weak whites; pink reds; and violets. Thirdly, if the colours be strong and vivid, they are always diversified, and the object is never of one strong colour; there are almost always such a number of them, (as in variegated flowers,) that the strength and glare of each is considerably abated. In a fine complexion, there is not only some variety in the colouring, but the colours: neither the red nor the white are strong and glaring. Besides, they are mixed in such a manner, and with such gradations, that it is impossible to fix the bounds. On the same principle it is, that the dubious colour in the necks and tails of peacocks, and about the heads of drakes, is so very agreeable. In reality, the beauty both of shape and colouring are as nearly related, as we can well suppose it possible for things of such different natures to be.

SECTION XVIII.

RECAPITULATION.

On the whole, the qualities of beauty, as they are merely sensible qualities, are the following; First, to be comparatively small. Secondly, to be smooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have those parts not angular, but melted as it were into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any remarkable appearance of strength. Sixthly, to have its colours clear and bright, but not very strong and glaring. Seventhly, or if it should have any glaring colour, to have it diversified with others. These are, I believe, the properties on which beauty depends; properties that operate by nature, and are less liable to be altered by caprice, or confounded by a diversity of tastes, than any other.

SECTION XIX.

THE PHYSIOGNOMY.

The *physiognomy* has a considerable share in beauty, especially in that of our own species. The manners give a certain determination to the countenance; which being observed to correspond pretty regularly with them, is capable of joining the effects of certain agreeable qualities of the mind to those of the body. So that to form a finished human beauty, and to give it its full influence, the face must be expressive of such gentle and amiable qualities, as correspond with the softness, smoothness, and delicacy of the outward form.

SECTION XX.

THE EYE.

I have hitherto purposely omitted to speak of the *eye*, which has so great a share in the

beauty of the animal creation, as it did not fall so easily under the foregoing heads, though in fact it is reducible to the same principles. I think then, that the beauty of the eye consists, first, in its *clearness*; what *coloured* eye shall please most, depends a good deal on particular fancies; but none are pleased with an eye whose water (to use that term) is dull and muddy.* We are pleased with the eye in this view, on the principle upon which we like diamonds, clear water, glass, and such like transparent substances. Secondly, the motion of the eye contributes to its beauty, by continually shifting its direction; but a slow and languid motion is more beautiful than a brisk one; the latter is enlivening; the former lovely. Thirdly, with regard to the union of the eye with the neighbouring parts, it is to hold the same rule that is given of other beautiful ones; it is not to make a strong deviation from the line of the neighbouring parts; nor to verge into any exact geometrical figure. Besides all this, the eye affects, as it is expressive of some qualities of the mind, and its principal power generally arises from this; so that what we have just said of the physiognomy is applicable here.

SECTION XXI.

UGLINESS.

It may perhaps appear like a sort of repetition of what we have before said, to insist here upon the nature of *ugliness*; as I imagine it to be in all respects the opposite to those qualities which we have laid down for the constituents of beauty. But though ugliness be the opposite to beauty, it is not the opposite to proportion and fitness. For it is possible that a thing may be very ugly with any proportions, and with a perfect fitness to any uses. Ugliness I imagine likewise to be consistent enough with an idea of the sublime. But I would by no means insinuate that ugliness of itself is a sublime idea, unless united with such qualities as excite a strong terrour.

SECTION XXII.

GRACE.

Gracefulness is an idea not very different from beauty; it consists in much the same things. Gracefulness is an idea belonging to *posture* and *motion*. In both these, to be graceful, it is requisite that there be no appearance of difficulty; there is required a small inflection of the body; and a composure of the parts in such a manner, as not to incumber each other, not to appear divided by sharp and sudden angles. In this case, this roundness, this delicacy of attitude and motion, it is that all the magic of grace consists, and what is called its *je ne sçai quoi*; as will be obvious to any observer, who considers attentively the Venus de Medicis, the Antinous, or any statue generally allowed to be graceful in a high degree.

SECTION XXIII.

ELEGANCE AND SPECIOUSNESS.

When any body is composed of parts smooth and polished, without pressing upon each other, without shewing any ruggedness or confusion, and at the same time affecting some *regular shape*, I call it *elegant*. It is closely allied to the beautiful, differing from it only in this *regularity*; which, however, as it makes a very material difference in the affection produced, may very well constitute another species. Under this head I rank those delicate and regular works of art, that imitate no determinate object in nature, as elegant buildings, and pieces of furniture. When any object partakes of the above-mentioned qualities, or of those of beautiful bodies, and is withal of great dimensions, it is full as remote from the idea of mere beauty; I call it *fine* or *specious*.

SECTION XXIV.

THE BEAUTIFUL IN FEELING.

The foregoing description of beauty, so far as it is taken in by the eye, may be greatly illustrated by describing the nature of objects, which produce a similar effect through the touch. This I call the beautiful in *Feeling*. It corresponds wonderfully with what causes the same species of pleasure to the sight. There is a chain in all our sensations; they are all but different sorts of feelings calculated to be affected by various sorts of objects, but all to be affected after the same manner. All bodies that are pleasant to the touch, are so

* Part IV. sect. 25.

by the slightness of the resistance they make. Resistance is either to motion along the surface, or to the pressure of the parts on one another: if the former be slight, we call the body smooth; if the latter, soft. The chief pleasure we receive by feeling, is in the one or the other of these qualities; and if there be a combination of both, our pleasure is greatly increased. This is so plain, that it is rather more fit to illustrate other things, than to be illustrated itself by an example. The next source of pleasure in this sense, as in every other, is the continually presenting somewhat new; and we find that bodies which continually vary their surface, are much the most pleasant or beautiful to the feeling, as any one that pleases may experience. The third property in such objects is, that though the surface continually varies its direction, it never varies it suddenly. The application of any thing sudden, even though the impression itself have little or nothing of violence, is disagreeable. The quick application of a finger a little warmer or colder than usual, without notice, makes us start; a slight tap on the shoulder, not expected, has the same effect. Hence it is that angular bodies, bodies that suddenly vary the direction of the outline, afford so little pleasure to the feeling. Every such change is a sort of climbing or falling in miniature; so that squares, triangles, and other angular figures are neither beautiful to the sight nor feeling. Whoever compares his state of mind, on feeling soft, smooth, variegated, unangular bodies, with that in which he finds himself, on the view of a beautiful object, will perceive a very striking analogy in the effects of both; and which may go a good way towards discovering their common cause. Feeling and sight, in this respect, differ in but a few points. The touch takes in the pleasure of softness, which is not primarily an object of sight; the sight, on the other hand, comprehends colour, which can hardly be made perceptible to the touch: the touch again has the advantage in a new idea of pleasure resulting from a moderate degree of warmth; but the eye triumphs in the infinite extent and multiplicity of its objects. But there is such a similitude in the pleasures of these senses, that I am apt to fancy, if it were possible that one might discern colour by feeling, (as it is said some blind men have done,) that the same colours, and the same disposition of colouring, which are found beautiful to the sight, would be found likewise most grateful to the touch. But, setting aside conjectures, let us pass to the other sense; of hearing.

SECTION XXV.

THE BEAUTIFUL IN SOUNDS.

In this sense we find an equal aptitude to be affected in a soft and delicate manner; and how far sweet or beautiful sounds agree with our descriptions of beauty in other senses, the experience of every one must decide. Milton has described this species of music in one of his juvenile poems.* I need not say that Milton was perfectly well versed in that art; and that no man had a finer ear, with a happier manner of expressing the affections of one sense by metaphors taken from another. The description is as follows:

——And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in *soft* Lydian airs;
In notes with many a *winding* bout
Of *linked sweetness long drawn* out;
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The *melting* voice through *mazes* running;
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

Let us parallel this with the softness, the winding surface, the unbroken continuance, the easy gradation of the beautiful in other things; and all the diversities of the several senses, with all their several affections, will rather help to throw lights from one another to finish one clear, consistent idea of the whole, than to obscure it by their intricacy and variety.

To the above-mentioned description I shall add one or two remarks. The first is; that the beautiful in music will not bear that loudness and strength of sounds, which may be used to raise other passions; nor notes which are shrill, or harsh, or deep; it agrees best with such as are clear, even, smooth, and weak. The second is; that great variety, and quick transitions from one measure or tone to another, are contrary to the genius of the beautiful in music. Such transitions† often excite mirth, or other sudden and tumultuous passions; but not that sinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteristical effect of the beautiful as it regards every sense. The passion excited by beauty is in fact nearer to a species of melancholy, than to jollity and mirth. I do not here mean to confine music to any one species of notes, or tones, neither is it an art in which I can say I have any great skill. My sole design in this remark is, to settle a consistent idea of beauty. The infinite variety of the affections of the soul will suggest to a good head, and skilful ear, a

* L'allegro.

† I ne'er am merry, when I hear sweet music.
SHAKESPEARE.

variety of such sounds as are fitted to raise them. It can be no prejudice to this, to clear and distinguish some few particulars, that belong to the same class, and are consistent with each other, from the immense crowd of different, and sometimes contradictory ideas, that rank vulgarly under the standard of beauty. And of these it is my intention to mark such only of the leading points as shew the conformity of the sense of hearing, with all the other senses in the article of their pleasures.

SECTION XXVI.

TASTE AND SMELL.

This general agreement of the senses is yet more evident on minutely considering those of taste and smell. We metaphorically apply the idea of sweetness to sights and sounds; but as the qualities of bodies by which they are fitted to excite either pleasure or pain in these senses, are not so obvious as they are in the others, we shall refer an explanation of their analogy, which is a very close one, to that part, wherein we come to consider the common efficient cause of beauty, as it regards all the senses. I do not think any thing better fitted to establish a clear and settled idea of visual beauty, than this way of examining the similar pleasures of other senses; for one part is sometimes clear in one of the senses, that is more obscure in another; and where there is a clear concurrence of all, we may with more certainty speak of any one of them. By this means, they bear witness to each other; nature is, as it were, scrutinized; and we report nothing of her but what we receive from her own information.

SECTION XXVII.

THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL COMPARED.

On closing this general view of beauty, it naturally occurs, that we should compare it with the sublime; and in this comparison there appears a remarkable contrast. For sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small: beauty should be smooth and polished; the great, rugged and negligent; beauty should shun the right line, yet deviate from it insensibly; the great in many cases loves the right line; and when it deviates, it often makes a strong deviation: beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy: beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive. They are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleasure; and however they may vary afterwards from the direct nature of their causes, yet these causes keep up an eternal distinction between them, a distinction never to be forgotten by any whose business it is to affect the passions. In the infinite variety of natural combinations, we must expect to find the qualities of things the most remote imaginable from each other united in the same object. We must expect also to find combinations of the same kind in the works of art. But when we consider the power of an object upon our passions, we must know that when any thing is intended to affect the mind by the force of some predominant property, the affection produced is like to be the more uniform and perfect, if all the other properties or qualities of the object be of the same nature, and tending to the same design as the principal.

If black and white blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, are there no black and white?

If the qualities of the sublime and beautiful are sometimes found united, does this prove that they are the same; does it prove that they are any way allied; does it prove even that they are not opposite and contradictory? Black and white may soften, may blend; but they are not therefore the same. Nor, when they are so softened and blended with each other, or with different colours, is the power of black as black, or of white as white, so strong as when each stands uniform and distinguished.

THE END OF THE THIRD PART.

PART IV.—SECTION I.

OF THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL.

When I say, I intend to enquire into the efficient cause of sublimity and beauty, I would not be understood to say, that I can come to the ultimate cause. I do not pretend that I shall ever be able to explain, why certain affections of the body produce such a distinct emotion of mind, and no other; or why the body is at all affected by the mind, or the mind by the body. A little thought will show this to be impossible. But I conceive, if we can discover

what affections of the mind produce certain emotions of the body; and what distinct feelings and qualities of body shall produce certain determinate passions in the mind, and no others, I fancy a great deal will be done; something not unuseful towards a distinct knowledge of our passions, so far at least as we have them at present under our consideration. This is all, I believe, we can do. If we could advance a step farther, difficulties would still remain, as we should be still equally distant from the first cause. When Newton first discovered the property of attraction, and settled its laws, he found it served very well to explain several of the most remarkable phænomena in nature; but yet with reference to the general system of things, he could consider attraction but as an effect; whose cause at that time he did not attempt to trace. But when he afterwards began to account for it by a subtile elastic æther, this great man (if in so great a man it be not impious to discover any thing like a blemish) seemed to have quitted his usual cautious manner of philosophising; since, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on this subject to be sufficiently proved, I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us. That great chain of causes, which links one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint struggle, that shews we are in an element which does not belong to us. So that when I speak of cause, and efficient cause, I only mean certain affections of the mind, that cause certain changes in the body; or certain powers and properties in bodies, that work a change in the mind. As if I were to explain the motion of a body falling to the ground, I would say it was caused by gravity; and I would endeavour to shew after what manner this power operated, without attempting to shew why it operated in this manner: or if I were to explain the effects of bodies striking one another by the common laws of percussion, I should not endeavour to explain how motion itself is communicated.

SECTION II.

ASSOCIATION.

It is no small bar in the way of our inquiry into the cause of our passions, that the occasion of many of them are given, and that their governing motions are communicated at a time when we have not capacity to reflect on them; at a time of which all sort of memory is worn out of our minds. For besides such things as affect us in various manners, according to their natural powers, there are associations made at that early season, which we find it very hard afterwards to distinguish from natural effects. Not to mention the unaccountable antipathies which we find in many persons, we all find it impossible to remember when a steep became more terrible than a plain; or fire or water more terrible than a clod of earth; though all these are very probably either conclusions from experience, or arising from the premonitions of others; and some of them impressed, in all likelihood, pretty late. But as it must be allowed that many things affect us after a certain manner, not by any natural powers they have for that purpose, but by association; so it would be absurd, on the other hand, to say that all things affect us by association only; since some things must have been originally and naturally agreeable or disagreeable, from which the others derive their associated powers; and it would be, I fancy, to little purpose to look for the cause of our passions in association, until we fail of it in the natural properties of things.

SECTION III.

CAUSE OF PAIN AND FEAR.

I have before observed,* that whatever is qualified to cause terrour, is a foundation capable of the sublime; to which I add, that not only these, but many things from which we cannot probably apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner. I observed too,† that whatever produces pleasure, positive and original pleasure, is fit to have beauty engrafted on it. Therefore, to clear up the nature of these qualities, it may be necessary to explain the nature of pain and pleasure on which they depend. A man who suffers under violent bodily pain, (I suppose the most violent, because the effect may be the more obvious;) I say a man in great pain has his teeth set, his eye-brows are violently contracted, his forehead is wrinkled, his eyes are dragged inwards, and rolled with great vehemence, his hair stands an end, the voice is forced out in short shrieks and groans, and the whole fabric totters. Fear or terrour, which

* Part I. sect. 8. † Part I. sect. 10.

ciated danger, the foregoing explication is, I believe, sufficient. It will require something more trouble to shew, that such examples as I have given of the sublime in the second part, are capable of producing a mode of pain, and of being thus allied to terrour, and to be accounted for on the same principles. And first of such objects as are great in their dimensions. I speak of visual objects.

SECTION IX.

WHY VISUAL OBJECTS OF GREAT DIMENSIONS ARE SUBLIME.

Vision is performed by having a picture formed by the rays of light which are reflected from the object painted in one piece, instantaneously, on the retina, or last nervous part of the eye. Or, according to others, there is but one point of any object painted on the eye in such a manner as to be perceived at once; but by moving the eye, we gather up, with great celerity, the several parts of the object, so as to form one uniform piece. If the former opinion be allowed, it will be considered,* that though all the light reflected from a large body should strike the eye in one instant; yet we must suppose that the body itself is formed of a vast number of distinct points, every one of which, or the ray from every one, makes an impression on the retina. So that, though the image of one point should cause but a small tension of this membrane, another, and another, and another stroke, must in their progress cause a very great one, until it arrives at last to the highest degree; and the whole capacity of the eye, vibrating in all its parts, must approach near to the nature of what causes pain, and consequently must produce an idea of the sublime. Again, if we take it, that one point only of an object is distinguishable at once; the matter will amount nearly to the same thing, or rather it will make the origin of the sublime from greatness of dimension yet clearer. For if but one point is observed at once, the eye must traverse the vast space of such bodies with great quickness, and consequently the fine nerves and muscles destined to the motion of that part must be very much strained; and their great sensibility must make them highly affected by this straining. Besides, it signifies just nothing to the effect produced, whether a body has its parts connected and makes its impression at once; or, making but one impression of a point at a time, it causes a succession of the same or others so quickly as to make them seem united; as is evident from the common effect of whirling about a lighted torch or piece of wood: which if done with celerity, seems a circle of fire.

* Part II. sect. 7

SECTION X.

UNITY WHY REQUISITE TO VASTNESS.

It may be objected to this theory, that the eye generally receives an equal number of rays at all times, and that therefore a great object cannot affect it by the number of rays, more than that variety of objects which the eye must always discern whilst it remains open. But to this I answer, that admitting an equal number of rays, or an equal quantity of luminous particles to strike the eye at all times, yet if these rays frequently vary their nature, now to blue, now to red, and so on, or their manner of termination, as to a number of petty squares, triangles, or the like, at every change, whether of colour or shape, the organ has a sort of relaxation or rest; but this relaxation and labour so often interrupted, is by no means productive of ease; neither has it the effect of vigorous and uniform labour. Whoever has remarked the different effects of some strong exercise, and some little piddling action, will understand why a teasing fretful employment, which at once wearies and weakens the body, should have nothing great; these sorts of impulses, which are rather teasing than painful, by continually and suddenly altering their tenour and direction, prevent that full tension, that species of uniform labour, which is allied to strong pain, and causes the sublime. The sum total of things of various kinds, though it should equal the number of the uniform parts composing some *one* entire object, is not equal in its effect upon the organs of our bodies. Besides the one already assigned, there is another very strong reason for the difference. The mind in reality hardly ever can attend diligently to more than one thing at a time; if this thing be little, the effect is little, and a number of other little objects cannot engage the attention; the mind is bounded by the bounds of the object; and what is not attended to, and what does not exist, are much the same in effect; but the eye or the mind (for in this case there is no difference) in great uniform objects does not readily arrive at their bounds; it has no

rest, whilst it contemplates them; the image is much the same every where. So that every thing great by its quantity must necessarily be one, simple and entire.

SECTION XI.

THE ARTIFICIAL INFINITE.

We have observed, that a species of greatness arises from the artificial infinite; and that this infinite consists in an uniform succession of great parts: we observed too, that the same uniform succession had a like power in sounds. But because the effects of many things are clearer in one of the senses than in another, and that all the senses bear analogy to, and illustrate one another, I shall begin with this power in sounds, as the cause of the sublimity from succession is rather more obvious in the sense of hearing. And I shall here once for all, observe, that an investigation of the natural and mechanical causes of our passions, besides the curiosity of the subject, gives, if they are discovered, a double strength and lustre to any rules we deliver on such matters. When the ear receives any simple sound, it is struck by a single pulse of the air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and species of the stroke. If the stroke be strong, the organ of hearing suffers a considerable degree of tension. If the stroke be repeated pretty soon after, the repetition causes an expectation of another stroke. And it must be observed, that expectation itself causes a tension. This is apparent in many animals, who, when they prepare for hearing any sound, rouse themselves, and prick up their ears: so that here the effect of the sounds is considerably augmented by a new auxiliary, the expectation. But though after a number of strokes, we expect still more, not being able to ascertain the exact time of their arrival, when they arrive, they produce a sort of surprise, which increases this tension yet further. For I have observed, that when at any time I have waited very earnestly for some sound, that returned at intervals, (as the successive firing of cannon,) though I fully expected the return of the sound, when it came it always made me start a little; the ear-drum suffered a convulsion, and the whole body consented with it. The tension of the part thus increasing at every blow, by the united forces of the stroke itself, the expectation, and the surprise, it is worked up to such a pitch as to be capable of the sublime; it is brought just to the verge of pain. Even when the cause has ceased, the organs of hearing being often successively struck in a similar manner, continue to vibrate in that manner for some time longer; this is an additional help to the greatness of the effect.

SECTION XII.

THE VIBRATIONS MUST BE SIMILAR.

But if the vibration be not similar at every impression, it can never be carried beyond the number of actual impressions; for, move any body as a pendulum, in one way, and it will continue to oscillate in an arch of the same circle, until the known causes make it rest; but if after first putting it in motion in one direction, you push it into another, it can never reassume the first direction; because it can never move itself, and consequently it can have but the effect of that last motion; whereas, if in the same direction you act upon it several times, it will describe a greater arch, and move a longer time.

SECTION XIII.

THE EFFECT OF SUCCESSION IN VISUAL OBJECTS EXPLAINED.

If we can comprehend clearly how things operate upon one of our senses, there can be very little difficulty in conceiving in what manner they affect the rest. To say a great deal therefore upon the corresponding affections of every sense, would tend rather to fatigue us by an useless repetition, than to throw any new light upon the subject, by that ample and diffuse manner of treating it; but as in this discourse we chiefly attach ourselves to the sublime, as it affects the eye, we shall consider particularly why a successive disposition of uniform parts in the same right line should be sublime,* and upon what principle this disposition is enabled to make a comparatively small quantity of matter produce a grander effect, than a much larger quantity disposed in another manner. To avoid the perplexity of general notions; let us set before our eyes a colonnade of uniform pillars planted in a right line; let us take our stand in such a manner, that the eye may shoot along

* Part II. sect. 10.

this colonnade, for it has its best effect in this view. In our present situation it is plain, that the rays from the first round pillar will cause in the eye a vibration of that species; an image of the pillar itself. The pillar immediately succeeding increases it; that which follows renews and enforces the impression; each in its order as it succeeds, repeats impulse after impulse, and stroke after stroke, until the eye, long exercised in one particular way, cannot lose that object immediately; and being violently roused by this continued agitation, it presents the mind with a grand or sublime conception. But instead of viewing a rank of uniform pillars; let us suppose that they succeed each other, a round and a square one alternately. In this case the vibration caused by the first round pillar perishes as soon as it is formed; and one of quite another sort (the square) directly occupies its place; which however it resigns as quickly to the round one; and thus the eye proceeds, alternately, taking up one image, and laying down another, as long as the building continues. From whence it is obvious, that at the last pillar, the impression is as far from continuing as it was at the very first; because in fact, the sensory can receive no distinct impression but from the last; and it can never of itself resume a dissimilar impression: besides every variation of the object is a rest and relaxation to the organs of sight; and these reliefs prevent that powerful emotion so necessary to produce the sublime. To produce therefore a perfect grandeur in such things as we have been mentioning, there should be a perfect simplicity, an absolute uniformity in disposition, shape, and colouring. Upon this principle of succession and uniformity it may be asked, why a long bare wall should not be a more sublime object than a colonnade; since the succession is no way interrupted; since the eye meets no check; since nothing more uniform can be conceived? A long bare wall is certainly not so grand an object as a colonnade of the same length and height. It is not altogether difficult to account for this difference. When we look at a naked wall, from the evenness of the object, the eye runs along its whole space, and arrives quickly at its termination; the eye meets nothing which may interrupt its progress; but then it meets nothing which may detain it a proper time to produce a very great and lasting effect. The view of a bare wall, if it be of a great height and length, is undoubtedly grand; but this is only *one* idea, and not a *repetition* of *similar* ideas: it is therefore great, not so much upon the principle of *infinity*, as upon that of *vastness*. But we are not so powerfully affected with any one impulse, unless it be one of a prodigious force indeed, as we are with a succession of similar impulses; because the nerves of the sensory do not (if I may use the expression) acquire a habit of repeating the same feeling in such a manner as to continue it longer than its cause is in action; besides all the effects which I have attributed to expectation and surprise in sect. 11, can have no place in a bare wall.

SECTION XIV.

LOCKE'S OPINION CONCERNING DARKNESS CONSIDERED.

It is Mr. Locke's opinion, that darkness is not naturally an idea of terrour; and that though an excessive light is painful to the sense, that the greatest excess of darkness is no ways troublesome. He observes indeed in another place, that a nurse or an old woman having once associated the idea of ghosts and goblins with that of darkness, night ever after becomes painful and horrible to the imagination. The authority of this great man is doubtless as great as that of any man can be, and it seems to stand in the way of our general principle.* We have considered darkness as a cause of the sublime; and we have all along considered the sublime as depending on some modification of pain or terrour: so that if darkness be no way painful or terrible to any, who have not had their minds early tainted with superstitions, it can be no source of the sublime to them. But, with all deference to such an authority, it seems to me, that an association of a more general nature, an association which takes in all mankind, may make darkness terrible; for in utter darkness it is impossible to know in what degree of safety we stand; we are ignorant of the objects that surround us; we may every moment strike against some dangerous obstruction; we may fall down a precipice the first step we take; and if an enemy approach, we know not in what quarter to defend ourselves; in such a case strength is no sure protection; wisdom can only act by guess; the boldest are staggered, and he who would pray for nothing else towards his defence is forced to pray for light.

Ζευ πατερ, αλλα συ ῥυσαι υπ' ηερος υιας Αχαιων·
Ποιησον δ' αιθρην, δος δ' οφθαλμοισιν ιδεσθαι·
Εν δε φαει και ολεσσον.——

* Part II. sect. 3.

As to the association of ghosts, and goblins; surely it is more natural to think, that darkness, being originally an idea of terrour, was chosen as a fit scene for such terrible representations, than that such representations have made darkness terrible. The mind of man very easily slides into an errour of the former sort; but it is very hard to imagine, that the effect of an idea so universally terrible in all times, and in all countries, as darkness, could possibly have been owing to a set of idle stories, or to any cause of a nature so trivial, and of an operation so precarious.

SECTION XV.

DARKNESS TERRIBLE IN ITS OWN NATURE.

Perhaps it may appear on inquiry, that blackness and darkness are in some degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatsoever. I must observe, that the ideas of darkness and blackness are much the same; and they differ only in this, that blackness is a more confined idea. Mr. Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy, who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight. Among many remarkable particulars that attended his first perceptions and judgments on visual objects, Cheselden tells us, that the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that some time after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horrour at the sight. The horrour, in this case, can scarcely be supposed to arise from any association. The boy appears by the account to have been particularly observing and sensible for one of his age; and therefore it is probable, if the great uneasiness he felt at the first sight of black had arisen from its connection with any other disagreeable ideas, he would have observed and mentioned it. For an idea, disagreeable only by association, has the cause of its ill effect on the passions evident enough at the first impression; in ordinary cases, it is indeed frequently lost; but this is, because the original association was made very early, and the consequent impression repeated often. In our instance, there was no time for such an habit; and there is no reason to think that the ill effects of black on his imagination were more owing to its connection with any disagreeable ideas, than that the good effects of more cheerful colours were derived from their connection with pleasing ones. They had both probably their effects from their natural operation.

SECTION XVI.

WHY DARKNESS IS TERRIBLE.

It may be worth while to examine how darkness can operate in such a manner as to cause pain. It is observable, that still as we recede from the light, nature has so contrived it, that the pupil is enlarged by the retiring of the iris, in proportion to our recess. Now, instead of declining from it but a little, suppose that we withdraw entirely from the light; it is reasonable to think, that the contraction of the radial fibres of the iris is proportionably greater; and that this part may by great darkness come to be so contracted, as to strain the nerves that compose it beyond their natural tone; and by this means to produce a painful sensation. Such a tension it seems there certainly is, whilst we are involved in darkness; for in such a state whilst the eye remains open, there is a continual nisus to receive light; this is manifest from the flashes and luminous appearances which often seem in these circumstances to play before it; and which can be nothing but the effect of spasms, produced by its own efforts in pursuit of its object; several other strong impulses will produce the idea of light in the eye, besides the substance of light itself, as we experience on many occasions. Some who allow darkness to be a cause of the sublime, would infer, from the dilatation of the pupil, that a relaxation may be productive of the sublime, as well as convulsion: but they do not I believe consider that although the circular ring of the iris be in some sense a sphincter, which may possibly be dilated by a simple relaxation, yet in one respect it differs from most of the other sphincters of the body, that it is furnished with antagonist muscles, which are the radial fibres of the iris: no sooner does the circular muscle begin to relax, than these fibres, wanting their counterpoise, are forcibly drawn back, and open the pupil to a considerable wideness. But though we were not apprised of this, I believe any one will find, if he opens his eyes and makes an effort to see in a dark place, that a very perceivable pain ensues. And I have heard some ladies remark, that after having worked a long time upon a ground of black, their eyes were so pained and weakened, they could hardly see. It may perhaps be objected to this theory of the mechanical effect of dark-

ness, that the ill effects of darkness or blackness seem rather mental than corporeal; and I own it is true, that they do so; and so do all those that depend on the affections of the finer parts of our system. The ill effects of bad weather appear often no otherwise, than in a melancholy and dejection of spirits; though without doubt, in this case, the bodily organs suffer first, and the mind through these organs.

SECTION XVII.

THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS.

Blackness is but a *partial darkness;* and therefore it derives some of its powers from being mixed and surrounded with coloured bodies. In its own nature, it cannot be considered as a colour. Black bodies, reflecting none, or but a few rays, with regard to sight, are but as so many vacant spaces dispersed among the objects we view. When the eye lights on one of these vacuities, after having been kept in some degree of tension by the play of the adjacent colours upon it, it suddenly falls into a relaxation; out of which it as suddenly recovers by a convulsive spring. To illustrate this; let us consider, that when we intend to sit on a chair, and find it much lower than was expected, the shock is very violent; much more violent than could be thought from so slight a fall as the difference between one chair and another can possibly make. If, after descending a flight of stairs, we attempt inadvertently to take another step in the manner of the former ones, the shock is extremely rude and disagreeable; and by no art can we cause such a shock by the same means when we expect and prepare for it. When I say that this is owing to having the change made contrary to expectation; I do not mean solely, when the *mind* expects. I mean likewise, that when an organ of sense is for some time effected in some one manner, if it be suddenly affected otherwise, there ensues a convulsive motion; such a convulsion as is caused when any thing happens against the expectance of the mind. And though it may appear strange that such a change as produces a relaxation, should immediately produce a sudden convulsion; it is yet most certainly so, and so in all the senses. Every one knows that sleep is a relaxation; and that silence, where nothing keeps the organs of hearing in action, is in general fittest to bring on this relaxation; yet when a sort of murmuring sounds dispose a man to sleep, let these sounds cease suddenly, and the person immediately awakes; that is, the parts are braced up suddenly, and he awakes. This I have often experienced myself, and I have heard the same from observing persons. In like manner, if a person in broad day light were falling asleep, to introduce a sudden darkness would prevent his sleep for that time, though silence and darkness in themselves, and not suddenly introduced, are very favourable to it. This I knew only by conjecture on the analogy of the senses when I first digested these observations; but I have since experienced it. And I have often experienced, and so have a thousand others, that on the first inclining towards sleep, we have been suddenly awakened with a most violent start; and that this start was generally preceded by a sort of dream of our falling down a precipice: whence does this strange motion arise, but from the too sudden relaxation of the body, which by some mechanism in nature restores itself by as quick and vigorous an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles! The dream itself is caused by this relaxation: and it is of too uniform a nature to be attributed to any other cause. The parts relax too suddenly, which is in the nature of falling; and this accident of the body induces this image in the mind. When we are in a confirmed state of health and vigour, as all changes are then less sudden, and less on the extreme, we can seldom complain of this disagreeable sensation.

SECTION XVIII.

THE EFFECTS OF BLACKNESS MODERATED.

Though the effects of black be painful originally, we must not think they always continue so. Custom reconciles us to every thing. After we have been used to the sight of black objects, the terrour abates, and the smoothness and glossiness or some agreeable accident of bodies so coloured, softens in some measure the horrour and sternness of their original nature; yet the nature of their original impression still continues. Black will always have something melancholy in it, because the sensory will always find the change to it from other colours too violent; or if it occupy the whole compass of the sight, it will then be darkness; and what was said of darkness will be applicable here. I do not purpose to go into all that might be said to illustrate this theory

of the effects of light and darkness; neither will I examine all the different effects produced by the various modifications and mixtures of these two causes. If the foregoing observations have any foundation in nature, I conceive them very sufficient to account for all the phænomena that can arise from all the combinations of black with other colours. To enter into every particular, or to answer every objection, would be an endless labour. We have only followed the most leading roads; and we shall observe the same conduct in our inquiry into the cause of beauty.

SECTION XIX.

THE PHYSICAL CAUSE OF LOVE.

When we have before us such objects as excite love and complacency; the body is affected, so far as I could observe, much in the following manner: the head reclines something on one side; the eye-lids are more closed than usual, and the eyes roll gently with an inclination to the object; the mouth is a little opened, and the breath drawn slowly, with now and then a low sigh; the whole body is composed, and the hands fall idly to the sides. All this is accompanied with an inward sense of melting and languor. These appearances are always proportioned to the degree of beauty in the object, and of sensibility in the observer. And this gradation from the highest pitch of beauty and sensibility, even to the lowest of mediocrity and indifference, and their correspondent effects, ought to be kept in view, else this description will seem exaggerated, which it certainly is not. But from this description it is almost impossible not to conclude, that beauty acts by relaxing the solids of the whole system. There are all the appearances of such a relaxation; and a relaxation somewhat below the natural tone seems to me to be the cause of all positive pleasure. Who is a stranger to that manner of expression so common in all times and in all countries, of being softened, relaxed, enervated, dissolved, melted away by pleasure? The universal voice of mankind, faithful to their feelings, concurs in affirming this uniform and general effect: and although some odd and particular instance may perhaps be found, wherein there appears a considerable degree of positive pleasure, without all the characters of relaxation, we must not therefore reject the conclusion we had drawn from a concurrence of many experiments; but we still must retain it, subjoining the exceptions which may occur according to the judicious rule laid down by Sir Isaac Newton in the third book of his Opticks. Our position will, I conceive, appear confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt, if we can shew that such things as we have already observed to be the genuine constituents of beauty, have each of them, separately taken, a natural tendency to relax the fibres. And if it must be allowed us, that the appearance of the human body, when all these constituents are united together before the sensory, further favours this opinion, we may venture, I believe, to conclude, that the passion called love is produced by this relaxation. By the same method of reasoning which we have used in the inquiry into the causes of the sublime, we may likewise conclude, that as a beautiful object presented to the sense, by causing a relaxation of the body, produces the passion of love in the mind; so if by any means the passion should first have its origin in the mind, a relaxation of the outward organs will as certainly ensue in a degree proportioned to the cause.

SECTION XX.

WHY SMOOTHNESS IS BEAUTIFUL.

It is to explain the true cause of visual beauty, that I call in the assistance of the other senses. If it appears that *smoothness* is a principal cause of pleasure to the touch, taste, smell, and hearing, it will be easily admitted a constituent of visual beauty; especially as we have before shewn, that this quality is found almost without exception in all bodies that are by general consent held beautiful. There can be no doubt that bodies which are rough and angular, rouse and vellicate the organs of feeling, causing a sense of pain, which consists in the violent tension or contraction of the muscular fibres. On the contrary, the application of smooth bodies relaxes; gentle stroking with a smooth hand allays violent pains and cramps, and relaxes the suffering parts from their unnatural tension; and it has therefore very often no mean effect in removing swellings and obstructions. The sense of feeling is highly gratified with smooth bodies. A bed smoothly laid and soft, that is, where the resistance is every way inconsiderable, is a great luxury, disposing to an universal relaxation, and inducing beyond any thing else, that species of it called sleep.

SECTION XXI.

SWEETNESS, ITS NATURE.

Nor is it only in the touch, that smooth bodies cause positive pleasure by relaxation. In the smell and taste, we find all things agreeable to them, and which are commonly called sweet, to be of a smooth nature, and that they all evidently tend to relax their respective sensories. Let us first consider the taste. Since it is most easy to inquire into the property of liquids, and since all things seem to want a fluid vehicle to make them tasted at all, I intend rather to consider the liquid than the solid parts of our food. The vehicles of all tastes are *water* and *oil*. And what determines the taste is some salt, which affects variously according to its nature, or its manner of being combined with other things. Water and oil, simply considered, are capable of giving some pleasure to the taste. Water, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colourless, and smooth; it is found, when *not cold*, to be a great resolver of spasms, and lubricator of the fibres; this power it probably owes to its smoothness. For as fluidity depends, according to the most general opinion, on the roundness, smoothness, and weak cohesion of the component parts of any body; and as water acts merely as a simple fluid; it follows, that the cause of its fluidity is likewise the cause of its relaxing quality; namely, the smoothness and slippery texture of its parts. The other fluid vehicle of tastes is *oil*. This too, when simple, is insipid, inodorous, colourless, and smooth to the touch and taste. It is smoother than water, and in many cases yet more relaxing. Oil is in some degree pleasant to the eye, the touch, and the taste, insipid as it is. Water is not so grateful; which I do not know on what principle to account for, other than that water is not so soft and smooth. Suppose that to this oil or water were added a certain quantity of a specific salt, which had a power of putting the nervous papillæ of the tongue into a gentle vibratory motion; as suppose sugar dissolved in it. The smoothness of the oil, and the vibratory power of the salt, cause the sense we call sweetness. In all sweet bodies, sugar, or a substance very little different from sugar, is constantly found; every species of salt, examined by the microscope, has its own distinct, regular, invariable form. That of nitre is a pointed oblong; that of sea-salt an exact cube; that of sugar a perfect globe. If you have tried how smooth globular bodies, as the marbles with which boys amuse themselves, have affected the touch when they are rolled backward and forward and over one another, you will easily conceive how sweetness, which consists in a salt of such nature, affects the taste; for a single globe, (though somewhat pleasant to the feeling,) yet by the regularity of its form, and the somewhat too sudden deviation of its parts from a right line, is nothing near so pleasant to the touch as several globes, where the hand gently rises to one and falls to another; and this pleasure is greatly increased if the globes are in motion, and sliding over one another; for this soft variety prevents that weariness, which the uniform disposition of the several globes would otherwise produce. Thus in sweet liquors, the parts of the fluid vehicle, though most probably round, are yet so minute, as to conceal the figure of their component parts from the nicest inquisition of the microscope; and consequently being so excessively minute, they have a sort of flat simplicity to the taste, resembling the effects of plain smooth bodies to the touch; for if a body be composed of round parts excessively small, and packed pretty closely together, the surface will be both to the sight and touch as if it were nearly plain and smooth. It is clear from their unveiling their figure to the microscope, that the particles of sugar are considerably larger than those of water or oil, and consequently, that their effects from their roundness will be more distinct and palpable to the nervous papillæ of that nice organ the tongue: they will induce that sense called sweetness, which in a weak manner we discover in oil, and in a yet weaker in water; for, insipid as they are, water and oil are in some degree sweet; and it may be observed, that insipid things of all kinds approach more nearly to the nature of sweetness than to that of any other taste.

SECTION XXII.

SWEETNESS RELAXING.

In the other senses we have remarked, that smooth things are relaxing. Now it ought to appear that sweet things, which are the smooth of taste, are relaxing too. It is remarkable, that in some languages soft and sweet have but one name. *Doux* in French signifies soft as well as sweet. The Latin *Dulcis*, and the Italian *Dolce*, have in many cases the same double signification. That sweet things are generally relaxing, is evident; because all such, espe-

cially those which are most oily, taken frequently, or in a large quantity, very much enfeeble the tone of the stomach. Sweet smells, which bear a great affinity to sweet tastes, relax very remarkably. The smell of flowers disposes people to drowsiness; and this relaxing effect is further apparent from the prejudice which people of weak nerves receive from their use. It were worth while to examine, whether tastes of this kind, sweet ones, tastes that are caused by smooth oils and a relaxing salt, are not the originally pleasant tastes. For many, which use has rendered such, were not at all agreeable at first. The way to examine this is, to try what nature has originally provided for us, which she has undoubtedly made originally pleasant; and to analyse this provision. *Milk*, is the first support of our childhood. The component parts of this are water, oil, and a sort of a very sweet salt, called the sugar of milk. All these when blended have a great *smoothness* to the taste, and a relaxing quality to the skin. The next thing children covet is *fruit*, and of fruits those principally which are sweet; and every one knows that the sweetness of fruit is caused by a subtile oil, and such salt as that mentioned in the last section. Afterwards, custom, habit, the desire of novelty, and a thousand other causes, confound, adulterate, and change our palates, so that we can no longer reason with any satisfaction about them. Before we quit this article, we must observe, that as smooth things are, as such, agreeable to the taste, and are found of a relaxing quality; so, on the other hand, things which are found by experience to be of a strengthening quality, and fit to brace the fibres, are almost universally rough and pungent to the taste, and in many cases rough even to the touch. We often apply the quality of sweetness, metaphorically, to visual objects. For the better carrying on this remarkable analogy of the senses, we may here call sweetness the beautiful of the taste.

SECTION XXIII.

VARIATION, WHY BEAUTIFUL.

Another principal property of beautiful objects is, that the line of their parts is continually varying its direction; but it varies it by a very insensible deviation; it never varies it so quickly as to surprise, or by the sharpness of its angle to cause any twitching or convulsion of the optic nerve. Nothing long continued in the same manner, nothing very suddenly varied, can be beautiful; because both are opposite to that agreeable relaxation which is the characteristic effect of beauty. It is thus in all the senses. A motion in a right line, is that manner of moving next to a very gentle descent, in which we meet the least resistance; yet it is not that manner of moving, which, next to a descent, wearies us the least. Rest certainly tends to relax: yet there is a species of motion which relaxes more than rest; a gentle oscillatory motion, a rising and falling. Rocking sets children to sleep better than absolute rest; there is indeed scarce any thing at that age, which gives more pleasure than to be gently lifted up and down; the manner of playing which their nurses use with children, and the weighing and swinging used afterwards by themselves as a favourite amusement, evince this very sufficiently. Most people must have observed the sort of sense they have had on being swiftly drawn in an easy coach on a smooth turf, with gradual ascents and declivities. This will give a better idea of the beautiful, and point out its probable cause better, than almost any thing else. On the contrary, when one is hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road, the pain felt by these sudden inequalities shews why similar sights, feelings, and sounds, are so contrary to beauty: and with regard to the feeling, it is exactly the same in its effect, or very nearly the same, whether, for instance, I move my hand along the surface of a body of a certain shape, or whether such a body is moved along my hand. But to bring this analogy of the senses home to the eye: if a body presented to that sense has such a waving surface, that the rays of light reflected from it are in a continual insensible deviation from the strongest to the weakest, (which is always the case in a surface gradually unequal,) it must be exactly similar in its effects on the eye and touch; upon the one of which it operates directly, on the other indirectly. And this body will be beautiful if the lines which compose its surface are not continued, even so varied, in a manner that may weary or dissipate the attention. The variation itself must be continually varied.

SECTION XXIV.

CONCERNING SMALLNESS.

To avoid a sameness which may arise from the too frequent repetition of the same reason-

ings, and of illustrations of the same nature, I will not enter very minutely into every particular that regards beauty, as it is founded on the disposition of its quantity, or its quantity itself. In speaking of the magnitude of bodies there is great uncertainty, because the ideas of great and small are terms almost entirely relative to the species of the objects, which are infinite. It is true, that having once fixed the species of any object, and the dimensions common in the individuals of that species, we may observe some that exceed, and some that fall short of, the ordinary standard: those which greatly exceed, are by that excess, provided the species itself be not very small, rather great and terrible than beautiful; but as in the animal world, and in a good measure in the vegetable world likewise, the qualities that constitute beauty may possibly be united to things of greater dimensions; when they are so united, they constitute a species something different both from the sublime and beautiful, which I have before called *fine*; but this kind, I imagine, has not such a power on the passions, either as vast bodies have which are endued with the correspondent qualities of the sublime; or as the qualities of beauty have when united in a small object. The affection produced by large bodies adorned with the spoils of beauty, is a tension continually relieved; which approaches to the nature of mediocrity. But if I were to say how I find myself affected upon such occasions, I should say, that the sublime suffers less by being united to some of the qualities of beauty, than beauty does by being joined to greatness of quantity, or any other properties of the sublime. There is something so overruling in whatever inspires us with awe, in all things which belong ever so remotely to terrour, that nothing else can stand in their presence. There lie the qualities of beauty either dead or unoperative; or at most exerted to mollify the rigour and sternness of the terrour, which is the natural concomitant of greatness. Besides the extraordinary great in every species, the opposite to this, the dwarfish and diminutive ought to be considered. Littleness, merely as such, has nothing contrary to the idea of beauty. The hummingbird, both in shape and colouring, yields to none of the winged species, of which it is the least; and perhaps his beauty is enhanced by his smallness. But there are animals, which when they are extremely small are rarely (if ever) beautiful. There is a dwarfish size of men and women, which is almost constantly so gross and massive in comparison of their *height, that they* present us with a very disagreeable image. But should a man be found not above two or three feet high, supposing such a person to have all the parts of his body of a delicacy suitable to such a size, and otherwise endued with the common qualities of other beautiful bodies, I am pretty well convinced that a person of such a stature might be considered as beautiful; might be the object of love; might give us very pleasing ideas on viewing him. The only thing which could possibly interpose to check our pleasure is, that such creatures, however formed, are unusual, and are often therefore considered as something monstrous. The large and gigantic, though very compatible with the sublime, is contrary to the beautiful. It is impossible to suppose a giant the object of love. When we let our imagination loose in romance, the ideas we naturally annex to that size are those of tyranny, cruelty, injustice, and every thing horrid and abominable. We paint the giant ravaging the country, plundering the innocent traveller, and afterwards gorged with his half-living flesh: such are Polyphemus, Cacus, and others, who make so great a figure in romances and heroic poems. The event we attend to with the greatest satisfaction is their defeat and death. I do not remember, in all that multitude of deaths with which the Iliad is filled, that the fall of any man, remarkable for his great stature and strength, touches us with pity; nor does it appear that the author, so well read in human nature, ever intended it should. It is Simoisius, in the soft bloom of youth, torn from his parents, who tremble for a courage so ill suited to his strength; it is another hurried by war from the new embraces of his bride, young, and fair, and a novice to the field, who melts us by his untimely fate. Achilles, in spite of the many qualities of beauty, which Homer has bestowed on his outward form, and the many great virtues with which he has adorned his mind, can never make us love him. It may be observed, that Homer has given the Trojans, whose fate he has designed to excite our compassion, infinitely more of the amiable social virtues than he has distributed among his Greeks. With regard to the Trojans, the passion he chooses to raise is pity; pity is a passion founded on love; and these *lesser*, and if I may say domestic virtues, are certainly the most amiable. But he has made the Greeks far their superiors in the politic and military virtues. The councils of Priam are weak; the arms of Hector comparatively feeble; his courage far below that of Achilles. Yet we love Priam more than Agamemnon, and Hector more than his con-

queror Achilles. Admiration is the passion which Homer would excite in favour of the Greeks, and he has done it by bestowing on them the virtues which have but little to do with love. This short digression is perhaps not wholly beside our purpose, where our business is to shew, that objects of great dimensions are incompatible with beauty, the more incompatible as they are greater; whereas the small, if ever they fail of beauty, this failure is not to be attributed to their size.

SECTION XXV.

OF COLOUR.

WITH regard to colour, the disquisition is almost infinite; but I conceive the principles laid down in the beginning of this part are sufficient to account for the effects of them all, as well as for the agreeable effects of transparent bodies, whether fluid or solid. Suppose I look at a bottle of muddy liquor, of a blue or red colour: the blue or red rays cannot pass clearly to the eye, but are suddenly and unequally stopped by the intervention of little opaque bodies, which without preparation change the idea, and change it too into one disagreeable in its own nature, conformable to the principles laid down in sect. 24. But when the ray passes without such opposition through the glass or liquor, when the glass or liquor are quite transparent, the light is sometimes softened in the passage, which makes it more agreeable even as light; and the liquor reflecting all the rays of its proper colour *evenly*, it has such an effect on the eye, as smooth opaque bodies have on the eye and touch. So that the pleasure here is compounded of the softness of the transmitted and the evenness of the reflected light. This pleasure may be heightened by the common principles in other things, if the shape of the glass which holds the transparent liquor be so judiciously varied, as to present the colour gradually and interchangeably, weakened and strengthened with all the variety which judgment in affairs of this nature shall suggest. On a review of all that has been said of the effects, as well as the causes of both, it will appear, that the sublime and beautiful are built on principles very different, and that their affections are as different: the great has terrour for its basis; which, when it is modified, causes that emotion in the mind, which I have called astonishment; the beautiful is founded on mere positive pleasure, and excites in the soul that feeling, which is called love. Their causes have made the subject of this fourth part.

THE END OF THE FOURTH PART.

PART V.—SECTION I.

OF WORDS.

NATURAL objects affect us, by the laws of that connection which Providence has established between certain motions and configurations of bodies, and certain consequent feelings in our mind. Painting affects in the same manner, but with the superadded pleasure of imitation. Architecture affects by the laws of nature, and the law of reason; from which latter result the rules of proportion, which make a work to be praised or censured, in the whole or in some part, when the end for which it was designed is or is not properly answered. But as to words; they seem to me to affect us in a manner very different from that in which we are affected by natural objects, or by painting or architecture; yet words have as considerable a share in exciting ideas of beauty and of the sublime as any of those, and sometimes a much greater than any of them; therefore an inquiry into the manner by which they excite such emotions, is far from being unnecessary in a discourse of this kind.

SECTION II.

THE COMMON EFFECT OF POETRY, NOT BY RAISING IDEAS OF THINGS.

THE common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence, as well as that of words in ordinary conversation, is, that they affect the mind by raising in it ideas of those things for which custom has appointed them to stand. To examine the truth of this notion, it may be requisite to observe that words may be divided into three sorts. The first are such as represent many simple ideas *united by nature* to form some one determinate composition, as man, horse, tree, castle, &c. These I call *aggregate words*. The second, are they that stand for one simple idea of such compositions, and no more; as red, blue, round, square, and the like. These I call *simple abstract* words. The third, are those, which are formed by an union,

an *arbitrary* union of both the others, and of the various relations between them in greater or lesser degrees of complexity; as virtue, honour, persuasion, magistrate, and the like. These I call *compound abstract* words. Words, I am sensible, are capable of being classed into more curious distinctions; but these seem to be natural, and enough for our purpose; and they are disposed in that order in which they are commonly taught, and in which the mind gets the ideas they are substituted for. I shall begin with the third sort of words; compound abstracts, such as virtue, honour, persuasion, docility. Of these I am convinced, that whatever power they may have on the passions, they do not derive it from any representation raised in the mind of the things for which they stand. As compositions, they are not real essences, and hardly cause, I think, any real ideas. Nobody, I believe, immediately on hearing the sounds, virtue, liberty, or honour, conceives any precise notions of the particular modes of action and thinking, together with the mixt and simple ideas, and the several relations of them for which these words are substituted; neither has he any general idea, compounded of them; for if he had, then some of those particular ones, though indistinct perhaps, and confused, might come soon to be perceived. But this, I take it, is hardly ever the case. For, put yourself upon analysing one of these words, and you must reduce it from one set of general words to another, and then into the simple abstracts and aggregates, in a much longer series than may be at first imagined, before any real idea emerges to light, before you come to discover any thing like the first principles of such compositions; and when you have made such a discovery of the original ideas, the effect of the composition is utterly lost. A train of thinking of this sort, is much too long to be pursued in the ordinary ways of conversation, nor is it at all necessary that it should. Such words are in reality but mere sounds; but they are sounds which being used on particular occasions, wherein we receive some good, or suffer some evil; or see others affected with good or evil; or which we hear applied to other interesting things or events; and being applied in such a variety of cases, that we know readily by habit to what things they belong, they produce in the mind, whenever they are afterwards mentioned, effects similar to those of their occasions. The sounds being often used without reference to any particular occasion, and carrying still their first impressions, they at last utterly lose their connection with the particular occasions that gave rise to them; yet the sound, without any annexed motion, continues to operate as before

SECTION III.

GENERAL WORDS BEFORE IDEAS.

Mr. Locke has somewhere observed, with his usual sagacity, that most general words, those belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, especially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are presented to the mind; and with them, the love of the one, and the abhorrence of the other; for the minds of children are so ductile, that a nurse, or any person about a child, by seeming pleased or displeased with any thing, or even any word, may give the disposition of the child a similar turn. When afterwards, the several occurrences in life come to be applied to these words, and that which is pleasant often appears under the name of evil; and what is disagreeable to nature is called good and virtuous; a strange confusion of ideas and affections arises in the minds of many; and an appearance of no small contradiction between their notions and their actions. There are many who love virtue and who detest vice, and this not from hypocrisy or affectation, who notwithstanding very frequently act ill, and wickedly in particulars without the least remorse; because these particular occasions never came into view, when the passions on the side of virtue were so warmly affected by certain words heated originally by the breath of others; and for this reason, it is hard to repeat certain sets of words, though owned by themselves unoperative, without being in some degree affected, especially if a warm and affecting tone of voice accompanies them, as suppose,

Wise, valiant, generous, good, and great.

These words, by having no application, ought to be unoperative; but when words commonly sacred to great occasions are used, we are affected by them even without the occasions. When words which have been generally so applied are put together without any rational view, or in such a manner that they do not rightly agree with each other, the style is called bombast. And it requires in several cases much good sense and experience to be guarded against the force of such language; for when propriety is neglected, a greater number of these affecting words may be taken into the service, and a greater variety may be indulged in combining them.

SECTION IV.

THE EFFECT OF WORDS.

If words have all their possible extent of power, three effects arise in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound*; the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abstract* words, of which we have been speaking, (honour, justice, liberty, and the like,) produce the first and the last of these effects, but not the second. *Simple abstracts*, are used to signify some one simple idea without much adverting to others which may chance to attend it, as blue, green, hot, cold, and the like; these are capable of affecting all three of the purposes of words; as the *aggregate* words, man, castle, horse, &c. are in a yet higher degree. But I am of opinion, that the most general effect even of these words, does not arise from their forming pictures of the several things they would represent in the imagination; because, on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to consider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any such picture is formed, and when it is, there is most commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpose. But the aggregate words operate, as I said of the compound-abstracts, not by presenting any image to the mind, but by having from use the same effect on being mentioned, that their original has when it is seen. Suppose we were to read a passage to this effect: "The river Danube rises in a moist and mountainous soil in the heart of Germany, where winding to and fro, it waters several principalities, until, turning into Austria, and leaving the walls of Vienna, it passes into Hungary; there with a vast flood, augmented by the Saave and the Drave, it quits Christendom, and rolling through the barbarous countries which border on Tartary, it enters by many mouths in the Black sea." In this description, many things are mentioned, as mountains, rivers, cities, the sea, &c. But let any body examine himself, and see whether he has had impressed on his imagination any pictures of a river, mountain, watery soil, Germany, &c. Indeed, it is impossible, in the rapidity and quick succession of words in conversation, to have ideas both of the sound of the word, and of the thing represented; besides, some words, expressing real essences, are so mixed with others of a general and nominal import, that it is impracticable to jump from sense to thought, from particulars to generals, from things to words, in such a manner as to answer the purposes of life; nor is it necessary that we should.

SECTION V.

EXAMPLES THAT WORDS MAY AFFECT WITHOUT RAISING IMAGES.

I find it very hard to persuade several that their passions are affected by words from whence they have no ideas; and yet harder to convince them, that in the ordinary course of conversation we are sufficiently understood without raising any images of the things concerning which we speak. It seems to be an odd subject of dispute with any man, whether he has ideas in his mind or not. Of this, at first view, every man in his own forum, ought to judge without appeal. But, strange as it may appear, we are often at a loss to know what ideas we have of things, or whether we have any ideas at all upon some subjects. It even requires a good deal of attention to be thoroughly satisfied on this head. Since I wrote these papers, I found two very striking instances of the possibility there is, that a man may hear words without having any idea of the things which they represent, and yet afterwards be capable of returning them to others, combined in a new way, and with great propriety, energy, and instruction. The first instance is that of Mr. Blacklock, a poet blind from his birth. Few men blessed with the most perfect sight can describe visual objects with more spirit and justness than this blind man; which cannot possibly be attributed to his having a clearer conception of the things he describes than is common to other persons. Mr. Spence, in an elegant preface which he has written to the works of this poet, reasons very ingeniously, and, I imagine, for the most part, very rightly, upon the cause of this extraordinary phenomenon; but I cannot altogether agree with him, that some improprieties in language and thought, which occur in these poems, have arisen from the blind poet's imperfect conception of visual objects, since such improprieties, and much greater, may be found in writers even of an higher class than Mr. Blacklock, and who notwithstanding possessed the faculty of seeing in its full perfection. Here is a poet doubtless as much affected by his own descriptions, as any that reads them can be; and yet he is affected with this strong enthusiasm by things of which he neither has, nor can possibly have

any idea further than that of a bare sound: and why may not those who read his works be affected in the same manner that he was; with as little of any real ideas of the things described? The second instance is of Mr. Saunderson, professor of mathematics in the university of Cambridge. This learned man had acquired great knowledge in natural philosophy, in astronomy, and whatever sciences depend upon mathematical skill. What was the most extraordinary and the most to my purpose, he gave excellent lectures upon light and colours; and this man taught others the theory of those ideas which they had, and which he himself undoubtedly had not. But it is probable that the words red, blue, green, answered to him as well as the ideas of the colours themselves; for the ideas of greater or lesser degrees of refrangibility being applied to these words, and the blind man being instructed in what other respects they were found to agree or to disagree, it was as easy for him to reason upon the words, as if he had been fully master of the ideas. Indeed it must be owned he could make no new discoveries in the way of experiment. He did nothing but what we do every day in common discourse. When I wrote this last sentence, and used the words *every day* and *common discourse*, I had no images in my mind of any succession of time; nor of men in conference with each other; nor do I imagine that the reader will have any such ideas on reading it. Neither when I spoke of red, or blue and green, as well as refrangibility, had I these several colours, or the rays of light passing into a different medium, and there diverted from their course, painted before me in the way of images. I know very well that the mind possesses a faculty of raising such images at pleasure; but then an act of the will is necessary to this; and in ordinary conversation or reading it is very rarely that any image at all is excited in the mind. If I say "I shall go to Italy next summer," I am well understood. Yet I believe nobody has by this painted in his imagination the exact figure of the speaker passing by land or by water, or both; sometimes on horseback, sometimes in a carriage; with all the particulars of the journey. Still less has he any idea of Italy the country to which I proposed to go; or of the greenness of the fields, the ripening of the fruits, and the warmth of the air, with the change to this from a different season, which are the ideas for which the word *summer* is substituted; but least of all has he any image from the word *next*; for this word stands for the idea of many *summers*, with the exclusion of all but one: and surely the man who says *next summer*, has no images of such a succession, and such an exclusion. In short it is not only of those ideas which are commonly called abstract, and of which no image at all can be formed, but even of particular real beings, that we converse without having any idea of them excited in the imagination; as will certainly appear on a diligent examination of our own minds. Indeed, so little does poetry depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images, that I am convinced it would lose a very considerable part of its energy if this were the necessary result of all description. Because that union of affecting words, which is the most powerful of all poetical instruments, would frequently lose its force along with its propriety and consistency, if the sensible images were always excited. There is not perhaps in the whole Eneid a more grand and laboured passage than the description of Vulcan's cavern in Etna, and the works that are there carried on. Virgil dwells particularly on the formation of the thunder, which he describes unfinished under the hammers of the Cyclops. But what are the principles of this extraordinary composition?

Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquosæ
Addiderant; rutili tres ignis et alitis austri:
Fulgores nunc terrificos, sonitumque, metumque
Miscebant operi, flammisque sequacibus iras.

This seems to me admirably sublime; yet if we attend coolly to the kind of sensible images which a combination of ideas of this sort must form, the chimeras of madmen cannot appear more wild and absurd than such a picture. "*Three rays of twisted showers, three of watery clouds, three of fire, and three of the winged south wind; then mixed they in the work terrific lightnings, and sound and fear, and anger, with pursuing flames.*" This strange composition is formed into a gross body; it is hammered by the Cyclops, it is in part polished, and partly continues rough. The truth is, if poetry gives us a noble assemblage of words corresponding to many noble ideas, which are connected by circumstances of time or place, or related to each other as cause and effect, or associated in any natural way, they may be moulded together in any form, and perfectly answer their end. The picturesque connection is not demanded; because no real picture is formed; nor is the effect of the description at all the less upon this account. What is said of Helen by Priam and the old men of his council, is generally thought to give us the highest possible idea of that fatal beauty.

Ου νεμεσις Τρωας και ευκνημιδας Αχαιους,
Τοιη δ' αμφι γυναικι πολυν χρονον αλγεα πασχειν.
Αινως δ' αθανατοισι θεης εις ωπα εοικεν.

They cry'd, no wonder such celestial charms
For nine long years have set the world in arms;
What winning graces! what majestic mien!
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.
POPE.

Here is not one word said of the particulars of her beauty; nothing which can in the least help us to any precise idea of her person; but yet we are much more touched by this manner of mentioning her than by those long and laboured descriptions of Helen, whether handed down by tradition, or formed by fancy, which are to be met with in some authors. I am sure it affects me much more than the minute description which Spenser has given of Belphebe; though I own that there are parts in that description, as there are in all the descriptions of that excellent writer, extremely fine and poetical. The terrible picture which Lucretius has drawn of religion, in order to display the magnanimity of his philosophical hero in opposing her, is thought to be designed with great boldness and spirit:

Humana ante oculos fœde cum vita jaceret,
In terris, oppressa gravi sub religione,
Quæ caput e cœli regionibus ostendebat
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus ihstans;
Primus Graius homo mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus.———

What idea do you derive from so excellent a picture? none at all, most certainly; neither has the poet said a single word which might in the least serve to mark a single limb or feature of the phantom, which he intended to represent in all the horrours imagination can conceive. In reality poetry and rhetoric do not succeed in exact description so well as painting does; their business is, to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker, or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves. This is their most extensive province, and that in which they succeed the best.

SECTION VI.

POETRY NOT STRICTLY AN IMITATIVE ART.

HENCE we may observe that poetry, taken in its most general sense, cannot with strict propriety be called an art of imitation. It is indeed an imitation so far as it describes the manners and passions of men which their words can express; where *animi motus effert interpretes lingua*. There it is strictly imitation; and all merely *dramatic* poetry is of this sort. But *descriptive* poetry operates chiefly by *substitution*; by means of sounds, which by custom have the effect of realities. Nothing is an imitation further than as it resembles some other thing; and words undoubtedly have no sort of resemblance to the ideas for which they stand.

SECTION VII.

HOW WORDS INFLUENCE THE PASSIONS.

NOW, as words affect, not by any original power, but by representation, it might be supposed, that their influence over the passions should be but light; yet it is quite otherwise; for we find by experience, that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay indeed much more capable, of making deep and lively impressions than any other arts, and even than nature itself in very many cases. And this arises chiefly from these three causes. First, that we take an extraordinary part in the passions of others, and that we are easily affected and brought into sympathy by any tokens which are shewn of them; and there are no tokens which can express all the circumstances of most passions so fully as words; so that if a person speaks upon any subject, he can not only convey the subject to you, but likewise the manner in which he is himself affected by it. Certain it is, that the influence of most things on our passions is not so much from the things themselves, as from our opinions concerning them; and these again depend very much on the opinions of other men, conveyable for the most part by words only. Secondly, there are many things of a very affecting nature, which can seldom occur in the reality, but the words which represent them often do; and thus they have an opportunity of making a deep impression and taking root in the mind, whilst the idea of the reality was transient; and to some perhaps never really occurred in any shape, to whom it is notwithstanding very affecting, as war, death, famine, &c. Besides many ideas have never been at all presented to the senses of any men but by words, as God, angels, devils, heaven, and hell, all of which have however a great influence over the passions. Thirdly, by words we have it in our power to make such *combinations* as we cannot possibly do otherwise. By this power of combining we are able, by the addition of well chosen circumstances, to give a new life and force to the simple object. In painting we may represent any

fine figure we please; but we never can give it those enlivening touches which it may receive from words. To represent an angel in a picture, you can only draw a beautiful young man winged: but what painting can furnish out any thing so grand as the addition of one word, "the angel of the *Lord?*" It is true, I have here no clear idea; but these words affect the mind more than the sensible image did; which is all I contend for. A picture of Priam dragged to the altar's foot, and there murdered, if it were well executed, would undoubtedly be very moving; but there are very aggravating circumstances, which it could never represent:

Sanguine fœdantem *quos ipse sacraverat* ignes.

As a further instance, let us consider those lines of Milton, where he describes the travels of the fallen angels through their dismal habitation

——O'er many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous;
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp;
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death.——

Here is displayed the force of union in

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades;

which yet would lose the greatest part of their effect, if they were not the

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and shades—
—— of *Death*.

This idea or this affection caused by a word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raises a very great degree of the sublime; and this sublime is raised yet higher by what follows, a "*universe of Death*." Here are again two ideas not presentable but by language; and an union of them great and amazing beyond conception; if they may properly be called ideas which present no distinct image to the mind:—but still it will be difficult to conceive how words can move the passions which belong to real objects, without representing these objects clearly. This is difficult to us, because we do not sufficiently distinguish, in our observations upon language, between a clear expression, and a strong expression. These are frequently confounded with each other, though they are in reality extremely different. The former regards the understanding; the latter belongs to the passions. The one describes a thing as it is; the latter describes it as it is felt. Now, as there is a moving tone of voice, an impassioned countenance, an agitated gesture, which affect independently of the things about which they are exerted, so *there are words*, and certain dispositions of words, which being peculiarly devoted to passionate subjects, and always used by those who are under the influence of any passion, touch and move us more than those which far more clearly and distinctly express the subject matter. We yield to sympathy what we refuse to description. The truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself. Then, by the contagion of our passions, we catch a fire already kindled in another, which probably might never have been struck out by the object described. Words, by strongly conveying the passions, by those means which we have already mentioned, fully compensate for their weakness in other respects. It may be observed, that very polished languages, and such as are praised for their superiour clearness and perspicuity, are generally deficient in strength. The French language has that perfection and that defect. Whereas the oriental tongues, and in general the languages of most unpolished people, have a great force and energy of expression; and this is but natural. Uncultivated people are but ordinary observers of things, and not critical in distinguishing them; but, for that reason, they admire more, and are more affected with what they see, and therefore express themselves in a warmer and more passionate manner. If the affection be well conveyed, it will work its effect without any clear idea; often without any idea at all of the thing which has originally given rise to it.

It might be expected from the fertility of the subject, that I should consider poetry as it regards the sublime and beautiful, more at large; but it must be observed that in this light it has been often and well handled already. It was not my design to enter into the criticism of the sublime and beautiful in any art, but to attempt to lay down such principles as may tend to ascertain, to distinguish, and to form a sort of standard for them; which purposes I thought might be best effected by an inquiry into the properties of such things in nature, as raise love and astonishment in us; and by shewing in what manner they operated to produce these passions. Words were only so far to be considered, as to shew upon what principle they were capable of being the representatives of these natural things, and by what powers they were able to affect us often as strongly as the things they represent, and sometimes much more strongly.

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF A LATE SHORT ADMINISTRATION.

1766.

THE late administration came into employment, under the mediation of the Duke of Cumberland, on the tenth day of July 1765; and was removed, upon a plan settled by the Earl of Chatham, on the thirtieth day of July 1766, having lasted just one year and twenty days.

In that space of time

The distractions of the British empire were composed, by *the repeal of the American stamp act*;

But the constitutional superiority of Great Britain was preserved, by *the act for securing the dependence of the colonies.*

Private houses were relieved from the jurisdiction of the excise, by *the repeal of the cyder-tax.*

The personal liberty of the subject was confirmed, by *the resolution against general warrants.*

The lawful secrets of business and friendship were rendered inviolable, by *the resolution for condemning the seizure of papers.*

The trade of America was set free from injudicious and ruinous impositions—its revenue was improved, and settled upon a rational foundation—its commerce extended with foreign countries; while all the advantages were secured to Great Britain, by *the act for repealing certain duties, and encouraging, regulating, and securing the trade of this kingdom, and the British dominions in America.*

Materials were provided and insured to our manufactures—the sale of these manufactures was increased—the African trade preserved and extended—the principles of the act of navigation pursued, and the plan improved—and the trade for bullion rendered free, secure, and permanent, by *the act for opening certain ports in Dominica and Jamaica.*

That administration was the first which proposed and encouraged public meetings and free consultations of merchants from all parts of the kingdom; by which means the truest lights have been received; great benefits have been already derived to manufactures and commerce; and the most extensive prospects are opened for further improvement.

Under them, the interests of our northern and southern colonies, before that time jarring and dissonant, were understood, compared, adjusted, and perfectly reconciled. The passions and animosities of the colonies, by judicious and lenient measures, were allayed and composed, and the foundation laid for a lasting agreement among them.

Whilst that administration provided for the liberty and commerce of their country, as the true basis of its power, they consulted its interests, they asserted its honour abroad, with temper and with firmness; by making an advantageous treaty of commerce with Russia; by obtaining a liquidation of the Canada bills, to the satisfaction of the proprietors; by reviving and raising from its ashes the negotiation for the Manilla ransom, which had been extinguished and abandoned by their predecessors.

They treated their sovereign with decency; with reverence. They discountenanced, and, it is hoped, for ever abolished, the dangerous and unconstitutional practice of removing military officers for their votes in parliament. They firmly adhered to those friends of liberty, who had run all hazards in its cause, and provided for them in preference to every other claim.

With the Earl of Bute they had no personal connection; no correspondence of councils. They neither courted him nor persecuted him. They practised no corruption; nor were they even suspected of it. They sold no offices,

590360 A

They obtained no reversions or pensions, either coming in or going out, for themselves, their families, or their dependents.

In the prosecution of their measures they were traversed by an opposition of a new and singular character; an opposition of placemen and pensioners. They were supported by the confidence of the nation. And having held their offices under many difficulties and discouragements, they left them at the express command, as they had accepted them at the earnest request, of their royal master.

These are plain facts; of a clear and public nature; neither extended by elaborate reasoning, nor heightened by the colouring of eloquence. They are the services of a single year.

The removal of that administration from power, is not to them premature; since they were in office long enough to accomplish many plans of public utility; and, by their perseverance and resolution, rendered the way smooth and easy to their successors; having left their king and their country in a much better condition than they found them. By the temper they manifest, they seem to have now no other wish, than that their successors may do the public as real and as faithful service as they have done.

OBSERVATIONS

ON A LATE PUBLICATION, INTITULED, "THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NATION."

"O Tite, si quid ego adjuvero curamve levasso,
Quæ nunc te coquit, et versat sub pectore fixa,
Ecquid erit pretii?" ENN. ap. CIC.

1769.

PARTY divisions, whether on the whole operating for good or evil, are things inseparable from free government. This is a truth which, I believe, admits little dispute, having been established by the uniform experience of all ages. The part a good citizen ought to take in these divisions, has been a matter of much deeper controversy. But God forbid, that any controversy relating to our essential morals should admit of no decision. It appears to me, that this question, like most of the others which regard our duties in life, is to be determined by our station in it. Private men may be wholly neutral, and entirely innocent; but they who are legally invested with public trust, or stand on the high ground of rank and dignity, which is trust implied, can hardly in any case remain indifferent, without the certainty of sinking into insignificance; and thereby in effect deserting that post in which, with the fullest authority, and for the wisest purposes, the laws and institutions of their country have fixed them. However, if it be the office of those who are thus circumstanced, to take a decided part, it is no less their duty that it should be a sober one. It ought to be circumscribed by the same laws of decorum, and balanced by the same temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not absolutely enervate that vigour, and quench that fervency of spirit, without which the best wishes for the public good must evaporate in empty speculation.

It is probably from some such motives that the friends of a very respectable party in this kingdom have been hitherto silent. For these two years past, from one and the same quarter of politics, a continual fire has been kept upon them; sometimes from the unwieldly column of quartos and octavos; sometimes from the light squadrons of occasional pamphlets and flying sheets. Every month has brought on its periodical calumny. The abuse has taken every shape which the ability of the writers could give it; plain invective, clumsy raillery, misrepresented anecdote.* No method of vilifying the measures, the abilities, the intentions, or the persons which compose that body, has been omitted.

On their part nothing was opposed but patience and character. It was a matter of the most serious and indignant affliction to persons, who thought themselves in conscience bound to oppose a ministry, dangerous from its very constitution, as well as its measures, to find themselves, whenever they faced their adversaries, continually attacked on the rear by a set of men who pretended to be actuated by motives similar to theirs. They saw that the plan long pursued with but too fatal a success, was to break the strength of this kingdom; by frittering down the bodies which compose it; by fomenting bitter and sanguinary animosities, and by dissolving every tie of social affection and public trust. These virtuous men, such I am warranted by public opinion to call them, were resolved rather to endure every thing, than co-operate in that design. A diversity of opinion upon almost every principle of politics had indeed drawn a strong line of separation between them and some others. However, they were desirous not to extend the

* History of the Minority. History of the Repeal of the Stamp-Act. Considerations on Trade and Finance. Political Register, &c. &c.

misfortune by unnecessary bitterness; they wished to prevent a difference of opinion on the commonwealth from festering into rancorous and incurable hostility. Accordingly they endeavoured that all past controversies should be forgotten; and that enough for the day should be the evil thereof. There is however a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. Men may tolerate injuries, whilst they are only personal to themselves. But it is not the first of virtues to bear with moderation the indignities that are offered to our country. A piece has at length appeared, from the quarter of all the former attacks, which upon every public consideration demands an answer. Whilst persons more equal to this business may be engaged in affairs of greater moment, I hope I shall be excused, if, in a few hours of a time not very important, and from such materials as I have by me, (more than enough however for this purpose,) I undertake to set the facts and arguments of this wonderful performance in a proper light. I will endeavour to state what this piece is; the purpose for which I take it to have been written; and the effects (supposing it should have any effect at all) it must necessarily produce.

This piece is called, *The present State of the Nation*. It may be considered as a sort of digest of the avowed maxims of a certain political school, the effects of whose doctrines and practices this country will feel long and severely. It is made up of a farrago of almost every topic which has been agitated in parliamentary debate, or private conversation, on national affairs for these last seven years. The oldest controversies are hauled out of the dust with which time and neglect had covered them. Arguments ten times repeated, a thousand times answered before, are here repeated again. Public accounts formerly printed and re-printed revolve once more, and find their old station in this sober meridian. All the common-place lamentations upon the decay of trade, the increase of taxes, and the high price of labour and provisions, are here retailed again and again in the same tone with which they have drawled through columns of Gazetteers and Advertisers for a century together. Paradoxes which affront common sense, and uninteresting barren truths which generate no conclusion, are thrown in to augment unwieldly bulk, without adding any thing to weight. Because two accusations are better than one, contradictions are set staring one another in the face, without even an attempt to reconcile them. And to give the whole a sort of portentous air of labour *and information*, the table of the house of commons is swept into this grand reservoir of politics.

As to the composition, it bears a striking and whimsical resemblance to a funeral sermon, not only in the pathetic prayer with which it concludes, but in the style and tenour of the whole performance. It is piteously doleful, nodding every now and then towards dulness; well stored with pious frauds, and, like most discourses of the sort, much better calculated for the private advantage of the preacher than the edification of the hearers.

The author has indeed so involved his subject, that it is frequently far from being easy to comprehend his meaning. It is happy for the public that it is never difficult to fathom his design. The apparent intention of this author is to draw the most aggravated, hideous, and deformed picture of the state of this country, which his querelous eloquence, aided by the arbitrary dominion he assumes over fact, is capable of exhibiting. Had he attributed our misfortunes to their true cause, the injudicious tampering of bold, improvident, and visionary ministers at one period, or to their supine negligence and traitorous dissensions at another, the complaint had been just, and might have been useful. But far the greater and much the worst part of the state which he exhibits is owing, according to his representation, not to accidental and extrinsic mischiefs attendant on the nation, but to its radical weakness and constitutional distempers. All this however is not without purpose. The author is in hopes, that, when we are fallen into a fanatical terrour for the national salvation, we shall then be ready to throw ourselves, in a sort of precipitate trust, some strange disposition of the mind jumbled up of presumption and despair, into the hands of the most pretending and forward undertaker. One such undertaker at least he has in readiness for our service. But let me assure this generous person, that however he may succeed in exciting our fears for the public danger, he will find it hard indeed to engage us to place any confidence in the system he proposes for our security.

His undertaking is great. The purpose of this pamphlet, and at which it aims directly or obliquely in every page, is to persuade the public of three or four of the most difficult points in the world—that all the advantages of the late war were on the part of the Bourbon alliance, that the peace of Paris perfectly consulted the dignity and interest of this country; and that the American stamp-act was a master-piece of policy and finance; that the only good minister this nation has enjoyed since his majesty's

accession, is the Earl of Bute; and the only good managers of revenue we have seen are Lord Despenser and Mr. George Grenville; and under the description of men of virtue and ability, he holds them out to us as the only persons fit to put our affairs in order. Let not the reader mistake me: he does not actually name these persons; but, having highly applauded their conduct in all its parts, and heavily censured every other set of men in the kingdom, he then recommends us to his men of virtue and ability.

Such is the author's scheme. Whether it will answer his purpose, I know not. But surely that purpose ought to be a wonderfully good one, to warrant the methods he has taken to compass it. If the facts and reasonings in this piece are admitted, it is all over with us. The continuance of our tranquillity depends upon the compassion of our rivals. Unable to secure to ourselves the advantages of peace, we are at the same time utterly unfit for war. It is impossible, if this state of things be credited abroad, that we can have any alliance; all nations will fly from so dangerous a connection, lest, instead of being partakers of our strength, they should only become sharers in our ruin. If it is believed at home, all that firmness of mind, and dignified national courage, which used to be the great support of this isle against the powers of the world, must melt away, and fail within us.

In such a state of things can it be amiss, if I aim at holding out some comfort to the nation; another sort of comfort indeed, than that which this writer provides for it; a comfort, not from its physician, but from its constitution; if I attempt to shew that all the arguments upon which he founds the decay of that constitution, and the necessity of that physician, are vain and frivolous? I will follow the author closely in his own long career, through the war, the peace, the finances, our trade, and our foreign politics: not for the sake of the particular measures which he discusses; that can be of no use; they are all decided; their good is all enjoyed, or their evil incurred: but for the sake of the principles of war, peace, trade, and finances. These principles are of infinite moment. They must come again and again under consideration; and it imports the public, of all things, that those of its ministers be enlarged, and just, and well confirmed, upon all these subjects. What notions this author entertains, we shall see presently; notions in my opinion very irrational, and extremely dangerous; and which, if they should crawl from pamphlets into counsels, and be realised from private speculation into national measures, cannot fail of hastening and completing our ruin.

This author, after having paid his compliment to the shewy appearances of the late war in our favour, is in the utmost haste to tell you that these appearances were *fallacious*, that they were no more than an *imposition*.—I fear I must trouble the reader with a pretty long quotation, in order to set before him the more clearly this author's peculiar way of conceiving and reasoning:

"Happily (the K.) was then advised by ministers, who did not suffer themselves to be dazzled by the glare of brilliant appearances; but, knowing them to be *fallacious*, they wisely resolved to profit of their splendour before our enemies should also *discover the imposition*.—The increase in the exports was found to have been occasioned chiefly by the demands of our *own fleets and armies*, and, instead of bringing wealth to the nation, was to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England. While the British seamen were consuming on board our men of war and privateers, foreign ships and foreign seamen were employed in the transportation of our merchandize; and the carrying trade, so great a source of wealth and marine, *was entirely engrossed by the neutral nations*. The number of British ships annually arriving in our ports was reduced 1756 sail, containing 92,559 tons, on a medium of the six years' war, compared with the six years of peace preceding it.—The conquest of the Havannah had, indeed, stopped the remittance of specie from Mexico to Spain; but it had not enabled England to seize it: on the contrary, our merchants suffered by the detention of the galleons, as *their correspondents in Spain were disabled from paying them for their goods sent to America. The loss of the trade to old Spain was a farther bar to an influx of specie*; and the attempt upon Portugal had not only deprived us of an import of bullion from thence, but the payment of our troops employed in its defence was a fresh drain opened for the diminution of our circulating specie.—The high premiums given for new loans had sunk the price of the old stock near a third of its original value, so that the purchasers had an obligation from the state to re-pay them with an addition of 33 *per cent.* to their capital. Every new loan required new taxes to be imposed; new taxes must add to the price of our manufactures *and lessen their consumption among foreigners*. The decay of our trade must necessarily *occasion a decrease of the public revenue*; and a deficiency of our funds must either be made up by fresh taxes, which would only add to the

calamity, or our national credit must be destroyed, by shewing the public creditors the inability of the nation to re-pay them their principal money.—Bounties had already been given for recruits which exceeded the year's wages of the ploughman and reaper; and as these were exhausted, and *husbandry stood still for want of hands*, the manufacturers were next to be tempted to quit the anvil and loom by higher offers.—*France, bankrupt France, had no such calamities impending over her; her distresses were great, but they were immediate and temporary; her want of credit preserved her from a great increase of debt, and the loss of her ultramarine dominions lessened her expenses. Her colonies had, indeed, put themselves into the hands of the English; but the property of her subjects had been preserved by capitulations, and a way opened for making her those remittances, which the war had before suspended, with as much security as in the time of peace.*—Her armies in Germany had been hitherto prevented from seizing upon Hanover; but they continued to encamp on the same ground on which the first battle was fought; and, as it must ever happen from the policy of that government, *the last troops she sent into the field were always found to be the best, and her frequent losses only served to fill her regiments with better soldiers. The conquest of Hanover became therefore every campaign more probable.* It is not to be noted, that the French troops received subsistence only, for the last three years of the war; and that, although large arrears were due to them at its conclusion, the charge was the less during its continuance."*

If any one be willing to see to how much greater lengths the author carries these ideas, he will recur to the book. This is sufficient for a specimen of his manner of thinking. I believe one reflection uniformly obtrudes itself upon every reader of these paragraphs. For what purpose in any cause shall we hereafter contend with France? can we ever flatter ourselves that we shall wage a more successful war? If, on our part, in a war the most prosperous we ever carried on, by sea and by land, and in every part of the globe, attended with the unparalleled circumstance of an immense increase of trade and augmentation of revenue; if a continued series of disappointments, disgraces, and defeats, followed by public bankruptcy, on the part of France; if all these still leave her a gainer on the whole balance, will it not be downright phrenzy in us ever to look her in the face again, or to contend with her any, even the most essential points, since victory and defeat, though by different ways, equally conduct us to our ruin? Subjection to France without a struggle will indeed be less for our honour, but on every principle of our author it must be more for our advantage. According to his representation of things, the question is only concerning the most easy fall. France had not discovered, our statesman tells us, at the end of that war, the triumphs of defeat, and the resources which are derived from bankruptcy. For my poor part, I do not wonder at their blindness. But the English ministers saw further. Our author has at length let foreigners also into the secret, and made them altogether as wise as ourselves. It is their own fault if (*vulgato imperii arcano*) they are imposed upon any longer. They now are apprised of the sentiments which the great candidate for the government of this great empire entertains; and they will act accordingly. They are taught our weakness and their own advantages.

He tells the world,† that if France carries on the war against us in Germany, every loss she sustains contributes to the achievement of her conquest. If her armies are three years unpaid, she is the less exhausted by expense. If her credit is destroyed, she is the less oppressed with debt. If her troops are cut to pieces, they will by her policy (and a wonderful policy it is) be improved, and will be supplied with much better men. If the war is carried on in the colonies, he tells them that the loss of her ultramarine dominions lessens her expenses,‡ and ensures her remittances:

> Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso
> Ducit opes animumque ferro.

If so, what is it we can do to hurt her?—it will be all an *imposition*, all *fallacious*. Why the result must be—*Occidit, occidit spes omnis et fortuna nostri nominis.*

The only way which the author's principles leave for our escape, is to reverse our condition into that of France, and to take her losing cards into our hands. But though his principles drive him to it, his politics will not suffer him to walk on this ground. Talking at our ease and of other countries, we may bear to be diverted with such speculations; but in England we shall never be taught to look upon the annihilation of our trade, the ruin of our credit, the defeat of our armies, and the loss of our ultramarine dominions, (whatever the author

* P. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

† P. 9, 10.

‡ P. 9.

may think of them,) to be the high road to prosperity and greatness.

The reader does not, I hope, imagine that I mean seriously to set about the refutation of these uningenious paradoxes and reveries without imagination. I state them only that we may discern a little in the questions of war and peace, the most weighty of all questions, what is the wisdom of those men who are held out to us as the only hope of an expiring nation. The present ministry is indeed of a strange character: at once indolent and distracted. But if a ministerial system should be formed, actuated by such maxims as are avowed in this piece, the vices of the present ministry would become their virtues; their indolence would be the greatest of all public benefits, and a distraction that entirely defeated every one of their schemes would be our only security from destruction.

To have stated these reasonings is enough, I presume, to do their business. But they are accompanied with facts and records, which may seem of a little more weight. I trust however that the facts of this author will be as far from bearing the touchstone, as his arguments. On a little inquiry, they will be found as great an imposition as the successes they are meant to depreciate; for they are all either false or fallaciously applied; or not in the least to the purpose for which they are produced.

First, the author, in order to support his favourite paradox, that our possession of the French colonies was of no detriment to France, has thought proper to inform us,* that "they put themselves into the hands of the English." He uses the same assertion, in nearly the same words, in another place;† "her colonies had put themselves into our hands." Now, in justice not only to fact and common sense, but to the incomparable valour and perseverance of our military and naval forces thus unhandsomely traduced, I must tell this author, that the French colonies did not "put themselves into the hands of the English." They were compelled to submit; they were subdued by dint of English valour. Will the five years' war carried on in Canada, in which fell one of the principal hopes of this nation, and all the battles lost and gained during that anxious period, convince this author of his mistake? Let him enquire of Sir Jeffery Amherst, under whose conduct that war was carried on; of Sir Charles Saunders, whose steadiness and presence of mind saved our fleet, and were so eminently serviceable in the whole course of the siege of Quebec; of General Monckton, who was shot through the body there, whether France "put her colonies into the hands of the English."

Though he has made no exception, yet I would be liberal to him; perhaps he means to confine himself to her colonies in the West Indies. But surely it will fare as ill with him there as in North America, whilst we remember that in our first attempt at Martinico we were actually defeated; that it was three months before we reduced Guadaloupe; and that the conquest of the Havannah was achieved by the highest conduct, aided by circumstances of the greatest good fortune. He knows the expense both of men and treasure at which we bought that place. However, if it had so pleased the peacemakers, it was no dear purchase; for it was decisive of the fortune of the war and the terms of the treaty: the duke of Nivernois thought so; France, England, Europe, considered it in that light; all the world, except the then friends of the then ministry, who wept for our victories, and were in haste to get rid of the burthen of our conquests. This author knows that France did not put those colonies into the hands of England; but he well knows who did put the most valuable of them into the hands of France.

In the next place, our author‡ is pleased to consider the conquest of those colonies in no other light than as a convenience for the remittances to France, which he asserts that the war had before suspended, but for which a way was opened (by our conquest) as secure as in time of peace. I charitably hope he knows nothing of the subject. I referred him lately to our commanders, for the resistance of the French colonies; I now wish he would apply to our custom-house entries, and our merchants, for the advantages which we derived from them.

In 1761, there was no entry of goods from any of the conquered places but Guadaloupe; in that year it stood thus:

Imports from Guadaloupe, value,	£.482,179
In 1762, when we had not yet delivered up our conquests, the account was	
Guadaloupe, - - - - - -	£.513,244
Martinico, - - - - - - -	288,425
Total imports in 1762, value,	£.801,669

* P. 9. † P. 6 ‡ P. 9.

In 1763, after we had delivered up the sovereignty of these islands, but kept open a communication with them, the imports were,

Gaudaloupe, - - - - - -	£.412,303
Martinico, - - - - - - -	344,161
Havannah, - - - - - - -	249,386
Total imports in 1763, value,	£.1,005,850

Besides, I find in the account of bullion imported and brought to the bank, that during that period in which the intercourse with the Havannah was open, we received at that one shop, in treasure, from that one place, £.559,810; in the year 1763, £.389,450; so that the import from these places in that year amounted to £.1,395,300.

On this state the reader will observe, that I take the imports from, and not the exports to, these conquests, as the measure of the advantages which we derived from them. I do so for reasons which will be somewhat worthy the attention of such readers as are fond of this species of inquiry. I say therefore I choose the import article, as the best, and indeed the only standard we can have, of the value of the West India trade. Our export entry does not comprehend the greatest trade we carry on with any of the West India islands, the sale of negroes: nor does it give any idea of two other advantages we draw from them; the remittances for money spent here, and the payment of part of the balance of the North American trade. It is therefore quite ridiculous, to strike a balance merely on the face of an excess of imports and exports, in that commerce; though, in most foreign branches, it is, on the whole, the best method. If we should take that standard, it would appear, that the balance with our own islands is, annually, several hundred thousand pounds against this country.* Such is its aspect on the custom-house entries; but we know the direct contrary to be the fact. We know that the West Indians are always indebted to our merchants, and that the value of every shilling of West India produce is English property. So that our import from them, and not our export, ought always to be considered as their true value; and this corrective ought to be applied to all general balances of our trade, which are formed on the ordinary principles.

If possible, this was more emphatically true of the French West India islands, whilst they continued in our hands. That none, or only a very contemptible part of the value of this produce, could be remitted to France, the author will see, perhaps with unwillingness, but with the clearest conviction, if he considers, that in the year 1763, *after we had ceased to export* to the isles of Guadaloupe and Martinico, and to the Havannah, and after the colonies were free to send all their produce to Old France and Spain, if they had any remittance to make; he will see, that we imported from those places, in that year, to the amount of £.1,395,300. So far was the whole annual produce of these islands from being adequate to the payments of their annual call upon us, that this mighty additional importation was necessary, though not quite sufficient, to discharge the debts contracted in the few years we held them. The property, therefore, of their whole produce, was ours; not only during the war, but even for more than a year after the peace. The author, I hope, will not again venture upon so rash and discouraging a proposition, concerning the nature and effect of those conquests, as to call them a convenience to the remittances of France; he sees by this account, that what he asserts is not only without foundation, but even impossible to be true.

As to our trade at that time, he labours with all his might to represent it as absolutely ruined, or on the very edge of ruin. Indeed, as usual with him, he is often as equivocal in his expression, as he is clear in his design. Sometimes he more than insinuates a decay of our commerce in that war; sometimes he admits an increase of exports; but it is in order to depreciate the advantages we might appear to derive from that increase, whenever it should come to be proved against him. He tells you,† "that it was chiefly occasioned by the demands of our own fleets and armies, and, instead of bringing wealth to the nation, was to be paid for by oppressive taxes upon the people of England." Never was any thing more destitute of foundation. It might be proved with the greatest ease, from the nature and quality of the goods exported, as well as from the situation of the places to which our merchandize was sent, and which the war could no wise affect, that the supply of our fleets and armies, could not have been the cause of this wonderful increase of

* Total imports from the West Indies in 1764, ... £.2,909,411
Exports to ditto in ditto, ... 896,511

Excess of imports, ... £.2,012,900

In this, which is the common way of stating the balance, it will appear upwards of two *millions* against us, which is ridiculous.

† P. 6.

trade; its cause was evident to the whole world; the ruin of the trade of France, and our possession of her colonies. What wonderful effects this cause produced, the reader will see below;* and he will form on that account some judgment of the author's candour or information.

Admit however that a great part of our export, though nothing is more remote from fact, was owing to the supply of our fleets and armies; was it not something?—was it not peculiarly fortunate for a nation, that she was able from her own bosom to contribute largely to the supply of her armies militating in so many distant countries? The author allows that France did not enjoy the same advantages. But it is remarkable throughout his whole book, that those circumstances which have ever been considered as great benefits, and decisive proofs of national superiority, are, when in our hands, taken either in diminution of some other apparent advantage, or even sometimes as positive misfortunes. The optics of that politician must be of a strange conformation, who beholds every thing in this distorted shape.

So far as to our trade. With regard to our navigation, he is still more uneasy at our situation, and still more fallacious in his state of it. In his text, he affirms it "to have been *entirely* engrossed by the neutral nations."† This he asserts roundly and boldly, and without the least concern; although it cost no more than a single glance of the eye upon his own margin to see the full refutation of this assertion. His own account proves against him, that in the year 1761, the British shipping amounted to 827,557 tons—the foreign to no more than 190,102. The medium of his six years British, 2,449,555 tons—foreign only 905,690. This state (his own) demonstrates that the neutral nations did not *entirely engross our navigation*.

I am willing from a strain of candour to admit that this author speaks at random; that he is only slovenly and inaccurate, and not fallacious. In matters of account, however, this want of care is not excusable; and the difference between neutral nations entirely engrossing our navigation, and being only subsidiary to a vastly augmented trade, makes a most material difference to his argument. From that principle of fairness, though the author speaks otherwise, I am willing to suppose he means no more than that our navigation had so declined as to alarm us with the probable loss of this valuable object. I shall however shew, that his whole proposition, whatever modifications he may please to give it, is without foundation; that our navigation was not decreased; that, on the contrary, it was greatly increased in the war; that it was increased by the war; and that it was probable the same cause would continue to augment it to a still greater height; to what an height it is hard to say, had our success continued.

But first, I must observe, I am much less solicitous whether his fact be true or no, than whether his principle is well established. Cases are dead things, principles are living and productive. I then affirm that, if in time of war our trade had the good fortune to increase,

1754.	£.	s.	d.
* Total export of British goods, value,	6,317,506	15	3
Ditto of foreign goods in time,	2,910,836	14	9
Ditto of ditto out of time,	569,495	2	10
Total exports of all kinds,	11,787,838	12	10
Total imports,	8,093,472	15	0
Balance in favour of England,	£.3,694,355	17	10

1761.			
Total export of British goods,	10,649,581	12	6
Ditto of foreign goods in time,	3,553,692	7	1
Ditto of ditto out of time,	355,015	0	2
Total exports of all kinds,	14,558,288	19	9
Total imports,	9,294,915	1	6
Balance in favour of England,	£.5,263,373	18	3

Here is the state of our trade in 1761, compared with a very good year of profound peace: both are taken from the authentic entries at the custom-house. How the author can contrive to make this increase of the export of English produce agree with his account of the dreadful want of hands in England, p. 9, unless he supposes manufactures to be made without hands, I really do not see It is painful to be so frequently obliged to set this author right in matters of fact. This statement will fully refute all that he has said or insinuated upon the difficulties and decay of our trade, p. 6,7, and 9.

† P. 7. See also p. 13.

and at the same time a large, nay the largest, proportion of carriage had been engrossed by neutral nations, it ought not in itself to have been considered as a circumstance of distress. War is a time of inconvenience to trade; in general it must be straitened, and must find its way as it can. It is often happy for nations that they are able to call in neutral navigation. They all aim at it. France endeavoured at it, but could not compass it. Will this author say, that in a war with Spain, such an assistance would not be of absolute necessity? that it would not be the most gross of all follies to refuse it?

In the next place, his method of stating a medium of six years of war, and six years of peace, to decide this question, is altogether unfair. To say, in derogation of the advantages of a war, that navigation is not equal to what it was in time of peace, is what hitherto has never been heard of. No war ever bore that test but the war which he so bitterly laments. One may lay it down as a maxim, that an average estimate of an object in a steady course of rising or of falling, must in its nature be an unfair one; more particularly if the cause of the rise or fall be visible, and its continuance in any degree probable. Average estimates are never just but when the object fluctuates, and no reason can be assigned why it should not continue still to fluctuate. The author chooses to allow nothing at all for this: he has taken an average of six years of the war. He knew, for every body knows, that the first three years were on the whole rather unsuccessful; and that, in consequence of this ill success, trade sunk, and navigation declined with it; but *that grand delusion* of the three last years turned the scale in our favour. At the beginning of that war, (as in the commencement of every war,) traders were struck with a sort of panic. Many went out of the freighting business. But by degrees, as the war continued, the terrour wore off; the danger came to be better appreciated, and better provided against; our trade was carried on in large fleets, under regular convoys, and with great safety. The freighting business revived. The ships were fewer, but much larger; and though the number decreased, the tonnage was vastly augmented; insomuch that in 1761 the *British* shipping had risen by the author's own account 527,557 tons.—In the last year he has given us of the peace it amounted to no more than 494,772; that is, in the last year of the war it was 32,785 tons more than in the correspondent year of his peace average. No year of the peace *exceeded it except* one, and that but little.

The fair account of the matter is this. Our trade had, as we have just seen, increased to so astonishing a degree in 1761, as to employ British and foreign ships to the amount of 707,659 tons, which is 149,500 more than we employed in the last year of the peace.—Thus our trade increased more than a fifth; our British navigation had increased likewise with this astonishing increase of trade, but was not able to keep pace with it; and we added about 120,000 ton of foreign shipping to the 60,000, which had been employed in the last year of the peace. Whatever happened to our shipping in the former years of the war, this would be no true state of the case at the time of the treaty. If we had lost something in the beginning, we had then recovered, and more than recovered, all our losses. Such is the ground of the doleful complaints of the author, that *the carrying trade was wholly engrossed by the neutral nations.*

I have done fairly, and even very moderately, in taking this year, and not his average, as the standard of what might be expected in future, had the war continued. The author will be compelled to allow it, unless he undertakes to shew; first, that the possession of Canada, Martinico, Guadaloupe, Grenada, the Havannah, the Philippines, the whole African trade, the whole East India trade, and the whole Newfoundland fishery, had no certain inevitable tendency to increase the British shipping; unless, in the second place, he can prove that those trades were, or might, by law or indulgence, be carried on in foreign vessels; and unless, thirdly, he can demonstrate that the premium of insurance on British ships was rising as the war continued. He can prove not one of these points. I will shew him a fact more that is mortal to his assertions. It is the state of our shipping in 1762. The author had his reasons for stopping short at the preceding year. It would have appeared, had he proceeded farther, that our tonnage was in a course of uniform augmentation, owing to the freight derived from our foreign conquests, and to the perfect security of our navigation from our clear and decided superiority at sea. This, I say, would have appeared from the state of the two years:

1761.	British, - -	527,557 tons.
1762.	Ditto, - -	559,537 tons.
1761.	Foreign - -	180,102 tons.
1762.	Ditto, - -	129,502 tons.

The two last years of the peace were in no degree equal to these. Much of the navigation

of 1763 was also owing to the war; this is manifest from the large part of it employed in the carriage from the ceded islands, with which the communication still continued open. No such circumstances of glory and advantage ever attended upon a war. Too happy will be our lot, if we should again be forced into a war, to behold any thing that shall resemble them; and if we were not then the better for them, it is not in the ordinary course of God's providence to mend our condition.

In vain does the author declaim on the high premiums given for the loans during the war. His long note swelled with calculations on that subject (even supposing the most inaccurate of all calculations to be just) would be entirely thrown away, did it not serve to raise a wonderful opinion of his financial skill in those who are not less surprised than edified, when, with a solemn face and mysterious air, they are told that two and two make four. For what else do we learn from this note? That the more expense is incurred by a nation, the more money will be required to defray it; that, in proportion to the continuance of that expense, will be the continuance of borrowing; that the increase of borrowing and the increase of debt will go hand in hand; and lastly, that the more money you want, the harder it will be to get it; and that the scarcity of the commodity will enhance the price. Who ever doubted the truth, or the insignificance, of these propositions? what do they prove? that war is expensive, and peace desirable. They contain nothing more than a common-place against war; the easiest of all topics. To bring them home to his purpose, he ought to have shewn, that our enemies had money upon better terms; which he has not shewn, neither can he. I shall speak more fully to this point in another place. He ought to have shewn, that the money they raised, upon whatever terms, had procured them a more lucrative return. He knows that our expenditure purchased commerce and conquest: theirs acquired nothing but defeat and bankruptcy.

Thus the author has laid down his ideas on the subject of war. Next follow those he entertains on that of peace. The treaty of Paris upon the whole has his approbation. Indeed, if his account of the war be just, he might have spared himself all further trouble. The rest is drawn on as an inevitable conclusion.* If the house of Bourbon had the advantage, she must give the law; and the peace, though it were much worse than it is, had still been a good one. But, as the world is yet *doubtful* on the state of that war, other arguments are necessary; and the author has in my opinion very ill supplied them. He tells of many things we have got, and of which he has made out a kind of bill. This matter may be brought within a very narrow compass, if we come to consider the requisites of a good peace under some plain distinct heads. I apprehend they may be reduced to these: 1. Stability; 2. Indemnification; 3. Alliance.

As to the first, the author more than obscurely hints in several places, that he thinks the peace not likely to last. However, he does furnish a security; a security, in any light, I fear, but insufficient; on his hypothesis, surely a very odd one, "By stipulating for the entire possession of the continent, (says he,) the restored French islands are become in some measure dependent on the British empire; and the good faith of France in observing the treaty guaranteed by the value at which she estimates their possession."† This author soon grows weary of his principles. They seldom last him for two pages together. When the advantages of the war were to be depreciated, then the loss of the ultramarine colonies lightened the expenses of France, facilitated her remittances, and therefore *her colonists put them into our hands*. According to this author's system, the actual possession of those colonies ought to give us little or no advantage in the negotiation for peace; and yet the chance of possessing them on a future occasion gives a perfect security for the preservation of that peace.‡ The conquest of the Havannah, if it did not serve Spain, rather distressed England, says our author.§ But the molestation which her galleons may suffer from our station in Pensacola gives us advantages, for which we were not allowed to credit the nation for the Havannah itself; a place surely full as well situated for every external purpose as Pensacola, and of more internal benefit than ten thousand Pensacolas.

The author sets very little by conquests;‖ I suppose it is because he makes them so very lightly. On this subject he speaks with the greatest certainty imaginable. We have, according to him, nothing to do, but to go and take possession, whenever we think proper, of

* P. 12, 13.

† P. 17.

‡ P. 6.

§ "Our merchants suffered by the detention of the galleons, as their correspondents in Spain were disabled from paying them for their goods sent to America." State of the Nation, p. 7.

‖ P. 12, 13.

the French and Spanish settlements. It were better that he had examined a little what advantage the peace gave us towards the invasion of these colonies, which we did not possess before the peace. It would not have been amiss if he had consulted the public experience, and our commanders, concerning the absolute certainty of those conquests on which he is pleased to found our security. And if, after all, he should have discovered them to be be so very sure, and so very easy, he might, at least, to preserve consistency, have looked a few pages back, and (no unpleasing thing to him) listened to himself, where he says, "that the most successful enterprise could not compensate to the nation for the waste of its people, by carrying on war in unhealthy climates."* A position which he repeats again, p. 9. So that, according to himself his security is not worth the suit; according to fact, he has only a chance, God knows what a chance, of getting at it; and therefore, according to reason, the giving up the most valuable of all possessions, in hopes to conquer them back, under any advantage of situation, is the most ridiculous security that ever was imagined for the peace of a nation. It is true his friends did not give up Canada; they could not give up every thing; let us make the most of it. We have Canada, we know its value. We have not the French any longer to fight in North America; and, from this circumstance, we derive considerable advantages. But here let me rest a little. The author touches upon a string, which sounds under his fingers but a tremulous and melancholy note. North America was once indeed a great strength to this nation, in opportunity of ports, in ships, in provisions, in men. We found her a sound, an active, a vigorous member of the empire. I hope, by wise management, she will again become so. But one of our capital present misfortunes is, her discontent and disobedience. To which of the author's favourites this discontent is owing, we all know but too sufficiently. It would be a dismal event, if this foundation of his security, and indeed of all our public strength, should, in reality, become our weakness; and if all the powers of this empire, which ought to fall with a compacted weight upon the head of our enemies, should be dissipated and distracted by a jealous vigilance, or by hostile attempts upon one another. Ten Canadas cannot restore that security for the peace, and for every thing valuable to this country, which we have lost along with the affection and the obedience of our colonies. He is the wise minister, he is the true friend to Britain, who shall be able to restore it.

To return to the security for the peace. The author tells us, that the original great purposes of the war were more than accomplished by the treaty. Surely he has experience and reading enough to know that, in the course of a war, events may happen, that render its original very far from being its principal purpose. This original may dwindle by circumstances, so as to become not a purpose of the second or even the third magnitude. I trust this is so obvious, that it will not be necessary to put cases for its illustration. In that war, as soon as Spain entered into the quarrel, the security of North America was no longer the sole nor the foremost object. The *Family Compact* had been I know not how long before in agitation. But then it was that we saw produced into day-light an action the most odious and most formidable of all the conspiracies against the liberties of Europe, that ever has been framed. The war with Spain was the first fruits of that league; and a security against that league ought to have been the fundamental point of a pacification with the powers who compose it. We had materials in our hands to have constructed that security in such a manner as never to be shaken. But how did the virtuous and able men of our author labour for this great end? They took no one step towards it. On the contrary they countenanced, and indeed, as far as it depended on them, recognised it in all its parts; for our plenipotentiary treated with those who acted for the two crowns, as if they had been different ministers of the same monarch. The Spanish minister received his instructions, not from Madrid; but from Versailles.

This was not hid from our ministers at home, and the discovery ought to have alarmed them, if the good of their country had been the object of their anxiety. They could not but have seen that the whole Spanish monarchy was melted down into the cabinet of Versailles. But they thought this circumstance an advantage; as it enabled them to go through with their work the more expeditiously. Expedition was every thing to them; because France might happen during a protracted negotiation to discover the great imposition of our victories.

In the same spirit they negotiated the terms of the peace. If it were thought adviseable not to take any positive security from Spain, the most obvious principles of policy dictated that the burthen of the cessions ought to fall upon France; and that every thing which was of

* P. 6.

grace and favour should be given to Spain. Spain could not, on her part, have executed a capital article in the family compact, which obliged her to compensate the losses of France. At least she could not do it in America; for she was expressly precluded by the treaty of Utrecht from ceding any territory or giving any advantage in trade to that power. What did our ministers? They took from Spain the territory of Florida, an object of no value except to shew our dispositions to be quite equal at least towards both powers; and they enabled France to compensate Spain by the gift of Louisiana: loading us with all the harshness, leaving the act of kindness with France, and opening thereby a door to the fulfilling of this the most consolidating article of the family compact. Accordingly that dangerous league, thus abetted and authorised by the English ministry without an attempt to invalidate it in any way, or in any of its parts, exists to this hour; and has grown stronger and stronger every hour of its existence.

As to the second component of a good peace, *compensation*, I have but little trouble; the author has said nothing upon that head. He has nothing to say. After a war of such expense, this ought to have been a capital consideration. But on what he has been so prudently silent, I think it is right to speak plainly. All our new acquisitions together, at this time, scarce afford matter of revenue either at home or abroad, sufficient to defray the expense of their establishments; not one shilling towards the reduction of our debt. Guadaloupe or Martinico alone would have given us material aid; much in the way of duties, much in the way of trade and navigation. A good ministry would have considered how a renewal of the *Assiento* might have been obtained. We had as much right to ask it at the treaty of Paris as at the treaty of Utrecht. We had incomparably more in our hands to purchase it. Floods of treasure would have poured into this kingdom from such a source; and, under proper management, no small part of it would have taken a public direction, and have fructified an exhausted exchequer.

If this gentleman's hero of finance, instead of flying from a treaty, which, though he now defends, he could not approve, and would not oppose; if he, instead of shifting into an office, which removed him from the manufacture of the treaty, had, by his credit with the then great director, acquired for us these, or any of these objects, the possession of Guadaloupe or Martinico, or the renewal of the *Assiento*, he might have held his head high in his country; because he would have performed real service; ten thousand times more real service, than all the economy of which this writer is perpetually talking, or all the little tricks of finance which the expertest juggler of the treasury can practice, could amount to in a thousand years. But the occasion is lost; the time is gone, perhaps, for ever.

As to the third requisite, *alliance*, there too the author is silent. What strength of that kind did they acquire? They got no one new ally; they stript the enemy of not a single old one. They disgusted (how justly, or unjustly, matters not) every ally we had; and from that time to this, we stand friendless in Europe. But of this naked condition of their country, I know some people are not ashamed. They have their system of politics; our ancestors grew great by another. In this manner these virtuous men concluded the peace; and their practice is only consonant to their theory.

Many things more might be observed on this curious head of our author's speculations. But, taking leave of what the writer says in his serious part, if he be serious in any part, I shall only just point out a piece of his pleasantry. No man, I believe, ever denied that the time for making peace is that in which the best terms may be obtained. But what that time is, together with the use that has been made of it, we are to judge by seeing whether terms adequate to our advantages, and to our necessities, have been actually obtained.—Here is the pinch of the question, and to which the author ought to have set his shoulders in earnest. Instead of doing this, he slips out of the harness by a jest; and sneeringly tells us, that, to determine this point, we must know the secrets of the French and Spanish cabinets,* and that parliament was pleased to approve the treaty of peace without calling for the correspondence concerning it. How just this sarcasm on that parliament may be, I say not; but how becoming in the author, I leave it to his friends to determine.

Having thus gone through the questions of

* Something however has transpired in the quarrels among those concerned in that transaction. It seems the *good Genius* of Britain so much vaunted by our author, did his duty nobly. Whilst we were gaining such advantages, the court of France was astonished at our concessions. "J'ai apporte a Versailles, il est vrai, les ratifications du Roi d'Angleterre *a vostre grand etonnement, et a celui de bien d'autres.* Je dois cela au bontes du Roi d'Angleterre, a celles de Milord Bute, a Mons. le Comte de Viry, a Mons. le Duc de Nivernois, et en fin a mon scavoir faire." Lettres, &c. de Chev. D'Eon, p. 51.

war and peace, the author proceeds to state our debt, and the interest which it carried, at the time of the treaty, with the unfairness and inaccuracy, however, which distinguish all his assertions, and all his calculations. To detect every fallacy, and rectify every mistake, would be endless. It will be enough to point out a few of them, in order to shew how unsafe it is to place any thing like an implicit trust in such a writer.

The interest of debt contracted during the war is stated by the author at £.2,614,892. The particulars appear in pages 14 and 15. Among them is stated the unfunded debt, £.9,975,017. supposed to carry interest on a medium at 3 *per cent.* which amounts to £.299,250. We are referred to the *Considerations on the Trade and Finances of the Kingdom*, p. 22, for the particulars of that unfounded debt. Turn to the work, and to the place referred to by the author himself, if you have a mind to see a clear detection of a capital fallacy of this article in his account. You will there see that this unfunded debt consists of the nine following articles: the remaining subsidy to the Duke of Brunswick; the remaining *dedommagement* to the Landgrave of Hesse; the German demands; the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the deficiencies of grants and funds; Mr. Touchet's claim; the debts due to Nova Scotia and Barbadoes; Exchequer bills; and Navy debt. The extreme fallacy of this state cannot escape any reader who will be at the pains to compare the interest money, with which he affirms us to have been loaded, in his *State of the Nation*, with the items of the principal debt to which he refers in his *Considerations*. The reader must observe, that of this long list of nine articles, only two, the exchequer bills, and part of the navy debt, carried any interest at all. The first amounted to £.1,800,000; and this undoubtedly carried interest. The whole navy debt indeed amounted to £.4,576,915; but of this only a *part* carried interest. The author of the *Considerations*, &c. labours to prove this very point in p, 18; and Mr. G. has always defended himself upon the same ground, for the insufficient provision he made for the discharge of that debt. The reader may see their own authority for it.*

Mr. G. did in fact provide no more than £.2,150,000. for the discharge of these bills in two years. It is much to be wished that these gentlemen would lay their heads together, that they would consider well this matter, and agree upon something. For when the scanty provision made for the unfunded debt is to be vindicated, then we are told it is a very *small part* of that debt which carries interest. But when the public is to be represented in a miserable condition, and the consequences of the late war to be laid before us in dreadful colours, then we are to be told that the unfunded debt is within a trifle of ten millions, and so large a portion of it carries interest that we must not compute less than 3 *per cent.* upon the *whole*.

In the year 1764, parliament voted £.650,000. towards the discharge of the navy debt. This sum could not be applied solely to the discharge of bills carrying interest; because part of the debt due on seamen's wages must have been paid, and some bills carried no interest at all. Notwithstanding this, we find by an account of the journals of the house of commons, in the following sessions, that the navy debt, carrying interest, was, on the 31st of December, 1764, no more than £.1,687,442. I am sure therefore that I admit too much when I admit the navy debt carrying interest after the creation of the navy annuities in the year 1763, to have been £.2,200,000. Add the exchequer bills; and the whole unfunded debt carrying interest will be four millions instead of ten; and the annual interest paid for it at 4 *per cent.* will be £.160,000. instead of £.299,250. An errour of no small magnitude, and which could not have been owing to inadvertency.

The misrepresentation of the increase of the peace establishment is still more extraordinary than that of the interest of the unfunded debt. The increase is great undoubtedly. However,

* "The navy bills are not due till six months after they have been issued; six months also of the seamen's wages by act of parliament must be, and in consequence of the rules prescribed by that act, twelve months' wages generally, and often much more are retained; and there has been besides at all times a large arrear of pay, which, though kept in the account, could never be *claimed, the persons to* whom it was due having left neither assignees nor representatives. The precise amount of such sums cannot be ascertained; but they can hardly be reckoned less than 13 or 14 hundred thousand pounds. On 31st Dec. 1754, when the navy debt was reduced nearly as low as it could be, it still amounted to 1,296,567*l.* 18*s.* 11¼*d.* consisting chiefly of articles which could not then be discharged; such articles will be larger now, in proportion to the increase of the establishment; and an allowance must always be made for them in judging of the state of the navy debt, though they are not distinguishable in the account. In providing for that which is payable, the principal object of the legislature is always to discharge the bills, for they are the greatest article; they bear an interest of 4 *per cent.*; and, when the quantity of them is large, they are a heavy incumbrance upon all money transactions."

the author finds no fault with it, and urges it only as a matter of argument to support the strange chimerical proposals he is to make us in the close of his work for the increase of revenue. The greater he made that establishment, the stronger he expected to stand in argument: but, whatever he expected or proposed, he should have stated the matter fairly. He tells us that this establishment is near £.1,500,000. more than it was in 1752, 1753, and other years of peace. This he has done in his usual manner, by assertion, without troubling himself either with proof or probability. For he has not given us any state of the peace establishment in the years 1753 and 1754, the time which he means to compare with the present. As I am obliged to force him to that precision, from which he always flies as from his most dangerous enemy, I have been at the trouble to search the journals in the period between the two last wars: and I find that the peace establishment, consisting of the navy, the ordnance, and the several incidental expenses, amounted to £.2,346,594. Now is this writer wild enough to imagine, that the peace establishment of 1764 and the subsequent years, made up for the same articles, is £.3,800,000. and upwards? His assertion however goes to this. But I must take the liberty of correcting him in this gross mistake, and from an authority he cannot refuse, from his favourite work, and standing authority, the Considerations. We find there, p. 43,* the peace establishment of 1764 and 1765 stated at £.3,609,700. This is near two hundred thousand pounds less than that given in The State of the Nation. But even from this, in order to render the articles which compose the peace establishment in the two periods correspondent, (for otherwise they cannot be compared,) we must deduct first, his articles of the deficiency of land and malt, which amount to £.300,000. They certainly are no part of the establishment; nor are they included in that sum, which I have stated above for the establishment in the time of the former peace. If they were proper to be stated at all, they ought to be stated in both accounts. We must also deduct the deficiencies of funds, £.202,400. These deficiencies are the difference between the interest charged on the public for monies borrowed, and the produce of the taxes laid for the discharge of that interest. Annual provision is indeed to be made for them by parliament: but in the inquiry before us, which is only what charge is brought on the public by interest paid or to be paid for money borrowed, the utmost that the author should do, is to bring into the account the full interest for all that money. This he has done in p. 15; and he repeats it in p. 18, the very page I am now examining, £.2,614,892. To comprehend afterwards in the peace establishment the deficiency of the fund created for payment of that interest, would be laying twice to the account of the war part of the same sum. Suppose ten millions borrowed at 4 *per cent.* and the fund for payment of the interest to produce no more than £.200,000. The whole annual charge on the public is £.400,000. It can be no more. But to charge the interest in one part of the account, and then the deficiency in the other, would be charging £.800,000. The deficiency of funds must therefore be also deducted from the peace establishment in the Considerations; and then the peace establishment in that author will be reduced to the same articles with those included in the sum I have already mentioned for the peace establishment before the last war, in the year 1753, and 1754.

* Navy - - - - - -	1,450,900
Army - - - - - -	1,268,500
Ordnance - - - - -	174,600
The four American governments	19,200
General surveys in America -	1,600
Foundling Hospital - -	28,000
To the African committee -	13,000
For the civil establishment on the coast of Africa	5,500
Militia - - - - - -	100,000
Deficiency of land and malt	300,000
Deficiency of funds - -	202,400
Extraordinaries of the army and navy	35,000
Total £.3,609,700	

Peace establishment in the Considerations, - - - - - -		£.3,609,700
Deduct deficiency of land and malt, - - - - -	300,000	
Ditto of funds - - -	202,400	
		502,400
		3,107,300
Peace establishment before the late war, in which no deficiencies of land and malt, or funds are included - - - - - - - -		2,346,594
Difference		£.760,706

Being about half the sum which our author has been pleased to suppose it.

Let us put the whole together. The author states,

Difference of peace establishment before and since the war - -	1,500,000

Interest of debt contracted by the war - - - - - - - - -		£.2,614,892
		4,114,892
The real difference in the peace establishment is - - - -	760,706	
The actual interest of the funded debt, including that charged on the sinking fund -	2,315,642	
The actual interest of unfunded debt at most,	160,000	
Total interest of debt contracted by the war - - - - -	2,475,642	
Increase of peace establishments, and interest of new debt, - -		3,236,348
Errour of the author,		£.878,544

It is true, the extraordinaries of the army have been found considerably greater than the author of the Considerations was pleased to foretel they would be. The author of The Present State avails himself of that increase, and, finding it suit his purpose, sets the whole down in the peace establishment of the present times. If this is allowed him, his errour perhaps may be reduced to £.700,000. But I doubt the author of the Considerations will not thank him for admitting £.200,000 and upwards as the peace establishment for extraordinaries, when that author has so much laboured to confine them within £.35,000.

These are some of the capital fallacies of the author. To break the thread of my discourse as little as possible, I have thrown into the margin many instances, though God knows far from the whole, of his inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and want of common care. I think myself obliged to take some notice of them, in order to take off from any authority this writer may have; and to put an end to the deference which careless men are apt to pay to one who boldly arrays his accounts, and marshals his figures, in perfect confidence that their correctness will never be examined.*

However, for argument, I am content to take his state of it. The debt was and is enormous. The war was expensive. The best œconomy had not perhaps been used. But I must observe, that war and œconomy are things not easily reconciled; and that the attempt of leaning towards parsimony in such a state may be the worst management, and in the end the worst œconomy in the world, hazarding the total loss of all the charge incurred, and of every thing along with it.

But *cui bono* all this detail of our debt? has the author given a single light towards any material reduction of it? Not a glimmering. We shall see in its place what sort of thing he proposes. But before he commences his operations, in order to scare the public imagination, he raises by art magic a thick mist before our eyes, through which glare the most ghastly and horrible phantoms:

> Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est,
> Non radii solis, neque lucida tela diei
> Discutiant, sed naturæ species ratioque.

Let us therefore calmly, if we can for the fright into which he has put us, appreciate those

* Upon the money borrowed in 1760, the premium of one *per cent.* was for 21 years, not for 20; this annuity has been paid eight years instead of seven; the sum paid is therefore £.560,000 instead of 560,000; the remaining term is worth 10 years and a quarter instead of 11 years;† its value is £.820,000 instead of £.880,000; and the whole value of that premium is £.1,160,000, instead of £.1,440,000. The like errours are observable in his computation on the additional capital of three *per cent.* on the loan of that year. In like manner, on the loan of 1762, the author computes on five years' payment instead of six; and says in express terms, that take 5 from 19, and there remains 13. These are not errours of the pen or the press; the several computations pursued in this part of the work with great diligence and earnestness prove them errours upon much deliberation. Thus the premiums in 1759 are cast up £.90,000 too little, an errour in the first rule of arithmetic. "The annuities borrowed in 1756 and 1758 are," says he, "to continue till redeemed by parliament." He does not take notice that the first are irredeemable till February 1771, the other till July 1782. In this the amount of the premiums is computed on the time which they have run. Weakly and ignorantly; for he might have added to this, and strengthened his argument, such as it is, by charging also the value of the additional one *per cent.* from the day on which he wrote to, at least that day on which these annuities become redeemable. To make ample amends, however, he has added to the premiums of 15 *per cent.* in 1759, and three *per cent.* in 1760, the annuity paid for them since their commencement; the fallacy of which is manifest; for the premiums in these cases can be neither more nor less than the additional capital for which the public stands engaged, and is just the same whether five or 500 years' annuity has been paid for it. In private life, no man persuades himself that he has borrowed £.200, because he happens to have paid 20 years' interest on loan of £.100.

† See Smart and Demoivre.

dreadful and deformed gorgons and hydras, which inhabit the joyless regions of an imagination, fruitful in nothing but the production of monsters.

His whole representation is founded on the supposed operation of our debt, upon our manufactures, and our trade. To this cause he attributes a certain supposed dearness of the necessaries of life, which must compel our manufacturers to emigrate to cheaper countries, particularly to France, and with them the manufacture. Thence consumption declining, and with it revenue. He will not permit the real balance of our trade to be estimated so high as £2,500,000; and the interest of the debt to foreigners carries off £1,500,000 of that balance. France is not in the same condition. Then follow his wailings and lamentings, which he renews over and over, according to his custom—a declining trade, and decreasing specie—on the point of becoming tributary to France—of losing Ireland—of having the colonies torn away from us.

The first thing upon which I shall observe is,* what he takes for granted as the clearest of all propositions, the emigration of our manufactures to France. I undertake to say that this assertion is totally groundless, and I challenge the author to bring any sort of proof of it. If living is cheaper in France, that is, to be had for less specie, wages are proportionably lower. No manufacturer, let the living be what it will, was ever known to fly for refuge to low wages. Money is the first thing which attracts him. Accordingly our wages attract artificers from all parts of the world. From two shillings to one shilling, is a fall, in all men's imaginations, which no calculation upon a difference in the price of the necessaries of life can compensate. But it will be hard to prove, that a French artificer is better fed, clothed, lodged, and warmed, than one in England; for that is the sense, and the only sense, of living cheaper. If, in truth and fact, our artificer fares as well in all these respects as one in the same state in France—how stands the matter in point of opinion and prejudice, the springs by which people in that class of life are chiefly actuated? The idea of our common people, concerning French living, is dreadful; altogether as dreadful as our author's can possibly be of the state of his own country; a way of thinking that will hardly ever prevail on them to desert to France.†

But, leaving the author's speculations, the fact is, that they have not deserted; and of course the manufacture cannot be departed, or departing, with them. I am not indeed able to get at all the details of our manufactures; though, I think, I have taken full as much pains for that purpose as our author. Some I have by me; and they do not hitherto, thank God, support the author's complaint, unless a vast increase of the quantity of goods manufactured be a proof of losing the manufacture. On a view of the registers in the west riding of Yorkshire, for three years before the war, and for the three last, it appears, that the quantities of cloths entered were as follow:

	Pieces broad.	Pieces narrow.
1752,	60,724	72,442
1753,	55,358	71,618
1754,	56,070	72,394
	172,152	216,454

	Pieces broad.	Pieces narrow.
1765,	54,660	77,419
1766,	72,575	78,893
1767,	102,428	78,819
3 years, ending 1767,	229,663	235,131
3 years, ending 1754,	172,152	216,454
Increase,	57,511	18,677

In this manner this capital branch of manufacture has increased, under the increase of taxes; and this not from a declining, but from a greatly flourishing period of commerce. I may say the same on the best authority of the fabric of thin goods at Halifax; of the bays at Rochdale; and of that infinite variety of admirable manufactures that grow and extend every year among the spirited, inventive, and enterprising traders of Manchester.

A trade sometimes seems to perish when it only assumes a different form. Thus the coarsest woollens were formerly exported in great quantities to Russia. The Russians now supply themselves with these goods. But the export thither of finer cloths has increased in proportion as the other has declined. Possibly some parts of the kingdom may have felt something like a languor in business. Objects

* P. 20, 21, 22.

† In a course of years a few manufacturers have been tempted abroad, not by cheap living, but by immense premiums, to set up as masters, and to introduce the manufacture. This must happen in every country eminent for the skill of its artificers, and has nothing to do with taxes and the price of provisions.

like trade and manufacture, which the very attempt to confine would certainly destroy, frequently change their place; and thereby, far from being lost, are often highly improved. Thus some manufactures have decayed in the west and south, which have made new and more vigorous shoots when transplanted into the north. And here it is impossible to pass by, though the author has said nothing upon it, the vast addition to the mass of British trade, which has been made by the improvement of Scotland. What does he think of the commerce of the city of Glasgow, and of the manufactures of Paisley and all the adjacent country? has this any thing like the deadly aspect and *facies Hippocratica* which the false diagnostic of our state physician has given to our trade in general? has he not heard of the iron works of such magnitude even in their cradle which are set up on the Carron, and which at the same time have drawn nothing from Sheffield, Birmingham, or Wolverhampton?

This might perhaps be enough to shew the entire falsity of the complaint concerning the decline of our manufactures. But every step we advance, this matter clears up more; and the false terrours of the author are dissipated, and fade away as the light appears. "The trade and manufactures of this country (says he) going to ruin, and a diminution of our *revenue from consumption* must attend the loss of so many seamen and artificers." Nothing more true than the general observation: nothing more false than its application to our circumstances. Let the revenue on consumption speak for itself:

Average of net excise, since the new duties, three years ending 1767,	£.4,590,734
Ditto before the new duties, three years ending 1759, - - - -	3,261,694
Average increase,	£.1,329,040

Here is no diminution. Here is, on the contrary, an immense increase. This is owing, I shall be told, to the new duties, which may increase the total bulk, but at the same time may make some diminution of the produce of the old. Were this the fact, it would be far from supporting the author's complaint. It might have proved that the burthen lay rather too heavy; but it would never prove that the *revenue from consumption* was impaired, which it was his business to do. But what is the real fact? Let us take, as the best instance for the purpose, the produce of the old hereditary and temporary excise granted in the reign of Charles the Second, whose object is that of most of the new impositions, from two averages, each of eight years.

Average, first period, eight years ending 1754, - - - - - - - -	£.525,317
Ditto, second period, eight years ending 1767, - - - - - - - -	538,542
Increase,	£.13,225

I have taken these averages as including in each a war and a peace period; the first before the imposition of the new duties, the other since those impositions; and such is the state of the oldest branch of the revenue from consumption. Besides the acquisition of so much new, this article, to speak of no other, has rather increased under the pressure of all those additional taxes to which the author is pleased to attribute its destruction. But as the author has make his grand effort against those moderate, judicious, and necessary levies, which support all the dignity, the credit, and the power of his country, the reader will excuse a little further detail on this subject; that we may see how little oppressive those taxes are on the shoulders of the public, with which he labours so earnestly to load its imagination. For this purpose we take the state of that specific article upon which the two capital burthens of the war leaned the most immediately; by the additional duties on malt, and upon beer.

	Barrels.
Average of strong beer, brewed in eight years before the additional malt and beer duties, - - -	3,895,059
Average of strong beer, eight years since the duties, - - - - -	4,060,726
Increase in the last period,	165,667

Here is the effect of two such daring taxes as 3d. by the bushel additional on malt, and 3s. by the barrel additional on beer. Two impositions laid without remission one upon the neck of the other; and laid upon an object which before had been immensely loaded. They did not in the least impair the consumption: it has grown under them. It appears that, upon the whole, the people did not feel so much inconvenience from the new duties as to oblige them to take refuge in the private brewery. Quite the contrary happened in both these respects in the reign of King William; and it

happened from much slighter impositions.* No people can long consume a commodity for which they are not well able to pay. An enlightened reader laughs at the inconsistent chimera of our author, of a people universally luxurious, and at the same time oppressed with taxes and declining in trade. For my part, I cannot look on these duties as the author does. He sees nothing but the burthen. I can perceive the burthen as well as he; but I cannot avoid contemplating also the strength that supports it. From thence I draw the most comfortable assurances of the future vigour, and the ample resources, of this great misrepresented country; and can never prevail on myself to make complaints which have no cause, in order to raise hopes which have no foundation.

When a representation is built on truth and nature, one member supports the other, and mutual lights are given and received from every part. Thus, as our manufacturers have not deserted, nor the manufacture left us, nor the consumption declined, nor the revenue sunk; so neither has trade, which is at once the result, measure, and cause of the whole, in the least decayed, as our author has thought proper sometimes to affirm, constantly to suppose, as if it were the most indisputable of all propositions. The reader will see below the comparative state of our trade† in three of the best years before our increase of debt and taxes, and with it the three last years since the author's date of our ruin.

In the last three years the whole of our exports was between 44 and 45 millions. In the three years preceding the war, it was no more than from 35 to 36 millions. The average balance of the former period was £.3,706,000; of the latter, something above four millions. It is true, that whilst the impressions of the author's destructive war continued, our trade was greater than it is at present. One of the necessary consequences of the peace was, that France must gradually recover a part of those markets of which she had been originally in possession. However, after all these deductions, still the gross trade in the worst year of the present is better than in the best year of any former period of peace. A very great part of our taxes, if not the greatest, has been imposed since the beginning of the century. On the author's principles, this continual increase of taxes must have ruined our trade, or at least entirely checked its growth. But I have a manuscript of Davenant, which contains an abstract of our trade for the years 1703 and 1704; by which it appears, that the whole export from England did not then exceed £.6,552,019. It is now considerably more than double that amount. Yet England was then a rich and flourishing nation.

The author endeavours to derogate from the balance in our favour as it stands on the entries, and reduces it from four millions as it there appears to no more than £.2,500,000. His observation on the looseness and inaccuracy of the export entries is just; and that the errour is always an errour of excess, I readily admit. But because, as usual, he has wholly omitted some very material facts, his conclusion is as erroneous as the entries he complains of.

On this point of the custom-house entries I shall make a few observations. 1st, The inaccuracy of these entries can extend only to FREE GOODS, that is, to such British products and manufactures, as are exported without drawback and without bounty; which do not in general amount to more than two-thirds at the very utmost of the whole export even of *our home products*. The valuable articles of corn, malt, leather, hops, beer, and many others, do not come under this objection of inaccuracy. The article of CERTIFICATE GOODS

* Although the public brewery has considerably increased in this latter period, the produce of the malt tax has been something less than in the former; this cannot be attributed to the new malt tax. Had this been the cause of the lessened consumption, the public brewery, so much more burthened, must have felt it more. The cause of this diminution of the malt tax, I take to have been principally owing to the greater dearness of corn in the second period than in the first, which, in all its consequences, affected the people in the country much more than those in the towns. But the revenue from consumption was not on the whole impaired, as we have seen in the foregoing page.

† Total imports, value, Exports, ditto

1752.	£.7,889,369	£.11,694,912	1764.	£.10,319,986	£.16,164,532
1753.	8,625,029	12,243,604	1765.	10,869,742	14,550,507
1754.	8,093,472	11,787,828	1766.	11,475,895	14,024,964
Total,	£.24,607,870	35,726,344	Total,	£.32,685,513	44,740,003
		24,607,870			32,685,513
	Exports exceed imports,	11,118,474		Exports exceed,	12,054,490
	Medium balance,	£.3,706,158		Medium balance for 3 last years,	£.4,018,163

re-exported, a vast branch of our commerce, admits of no errour, (except some smaller frauds which cannot be estimated,) as they have all a drawback of duty, and the exporter must therefore correctly specify their quantity and kind. The author therefore is not warranted from the known errour in some of the entries, to make a general defalcation from the whole balance in our favour. This errour cannot affect more than half, if so much, of the export article. 2dly, In the account made up at the inspector general's office, they estimate only the original cost of British products as they are here purchased; and on foreign goods, only the prices in the country from whence they are sent. This was the method established by Mr. Davenant; and, as far as it goes, it certainly is a good one. But the profits of the merchant at home, and of our factories abroad, are not taken into the account: which profit on such an immense quantity of goods exported and re-exported cannot fail of being very great: five *per cent.* upon the whole, I should think a very moderate allowance. 3dly, It does not comprehend the advantage arising from the employment of 600,000 tons of shipping, which must be paid by the foreign consumer, and which, in many bulky articles of commerce, is equal to the value of the commodity. This can scarcely be rated at less than a million annually. 4thly, The whole import from Ireland and America, and from the West Indies, is set against us in the ordinary way of striking a balance of imports and exports; whereas the import and export are both our own. This is just as ridiculous, as to put against the general balance of the nation, how much more goods Cheshire receives from London, than London from Cheshire. The whole revolves and circulates through this kingdom, and is, so far as it regards our profit, in the nature of home trade, as much as if the several countries of America and Ireland were all pieced to Cornwall. The course of exchange with all these places is fully sufficient to demonstrate that this kingdom has the whole advantage of their commerce. When the final profit upon a whole system of trade rests and centers in a certain place, a balance struck in that place merely on the mutual sale of commodities is quite fallacious. 5thly, The custom-house entries furnish a most defective, and indeed ridiculous idea, of the most valuable branch of trade we have in the world, that with Newfoundland. Observe what you export thither; a little spirits, provision, fishing lines, and fishing hooks. Is this *export* the true idea of the Newfoundland trade in the light of a beneficial branch of commerce? nothing less. Examine our imports from thence; it seems, upon this vulgar idea of exports and imports, to turn the balance against you. But your exports to Newfoundland are your own goods. Your import is your own food; as much your own, as that you raise with your ploughs out of your own soil; and not your loss, but your gain; your riches, not your poverty. But so fallacious is this way of judging, that neither the export nor import, nor both together, supply any idea approaching to adequate of that branch of business. The vessels in that trade go straight from Newfoundland to the foreign market; and the sale there, not the import here, is the measure of its value. That trade, which is one of your greatest and best, is hardly so much as seen in the custom-house entries; and it is not of less annual value to this nation than £.400,000. 6thly, The quality of your imports must be considered as well as the quantity. To state the whole of the foreign import *as loss*, is exceedingly absurd. All the iron, hemp, flax, cotton, Spanish wool, raw silk, woollen and linen yarn, which we import, are by no means to be considered as the matter of a merely luxurious consumption; which is the idea too generally and loosely annexed to our import article. These above-mentioned are materials of industry, not of luxury, which are wrought up here, in many instances, to ten times, and more, of their original value. Even where they are not subservient to our exports, they still add to our internal wealth, which consists in the stock of useful commodities, as much as in gold and silver. In looking over the specific articles of our export and import, I have often been astonished to see for how small a part of the supply of our consumption, either luxurious or convenient, we are indebted to nations properly foreign to us.

These considerations are entirely passed over by the author; they have been but too much neglected by most who have speculated on this subject. But they ought never to be omitted by those who mean to come to any thing like the true state of the British trade. They compensate, and they more than compensate, every thing which the author can cut off with any appearance of reason for the over-entry of British goods; and they restore to us that balance of four millions, which the author has thought proper on such a very poor and limited comprehension of the object to reduce to £.2,500,000.

In general this author is so circumstanced, that to support his theory he is obliged to assume his facts: and then, if you allow his

facts, they will not support his conclusions. What if all he says of the state of this balance were true? did not the same objections always lie to custom-house entries? do they defalcate more from the entries of 1766 than from those of 1754? If they prove us ruined, we were always ruined. Some ravens have always indeed croaked out this kind of song. They have a malignant delight in presaging mischief, when they are not employed in doing it: they are miserable and disappointed at every instance of the public prosperity. They overlook us like the malevolent being of the poet:

———Tritonida conspicit arcem
Ingeniis, opibusque, et festa pace virentem;
Vixque tenet lacrymas quia nil lacrymabile cernit.

It is in this spirit that some have looked upon those accidents that cast an occasional damp upon trade. Their imaginations entail these accidents upon us in perpetuity. We have had some bad harvests. This must very disadvantageously affect the balance of trade, and the navigation of a people, so large a part of whose commerce is in grain. But, in knowing the cause, we are morally certain, that, according to the course of events, it cannot long subsist. In the three last years, we have exported scarcely any grain; in good years, that export hath been worth twelve hundred thousand pounds and more; in the two last years, far from exporting, we have been obliged to import to the amount perhaps of our former exportation. So that in this article the balance must be £.2,000,000 against us; that is, one million in the ceasing of gain, the other in the increase of expenditure. But none of the author's promises or projects could have prevented this misfortune; and, thank God, we do not want him or them to relieve us from it; although, if his friends should now come into power, I doubt not but they will be ready to take credit for any increase of trade or excise that may arise from the happy circumstance of a good harvest.

This connects with his loud laments and melancholy prognostications concerning the high price of the necessaries of life and the products of labour. With all his others, I deny this fact; and I again call upon him to prove it. Take average and not accident, the grand and first necessary of life is cheap in this country; and that too as weighed, not against labour, which is its true counterpoise, but against money. Does he call the price of wheat at this day, between 32 and 40 shillings *per* quarter in London, dear?* He must know that fuel (an object of the highest order in the necessaries of life, and of the first necessity in almost every kind of manufacture) is in many of our provinces cheaper than in any part of the globe. Meat is on the whole not excessively dear, whatever its price may be at particular times and from particular accidents. If it has had any thing like an uniform rise, this enhancement may easily be proved not to be owing to the increase of taxes, but to uniform increase of consumption and of money. Diminish the latter, and meat in your markets will be sufficiently cheap in account, but much dearer in effect: because fewer will be in a condition to buy. Thus your apparent plenty will be real indigence. At present, even under temporary disadvantages, the use of flesh is greater here than any where else; it is continued without any interruption of Lents or meagre days; it is sustained and growing even with the increase of our taxes. But some have the art of converting even the signs of national prosperity into symptoms of decay and ruin. And our author, who so loudly disclaims popularity, never fails to lay hold of the most vulgar popular prejudices and humours, in hopes to captivate the crowd. Even those peevish dispositions which grow out of some transitory suffering, those passing clouds which float in our changeable atmosphere; are by him industriously figured into frightful shapes, in order first to terrify and then to govern the populace.

It was not enough for the author's purpose to give this false and discouraging picture of the state of his own country. It did not fully answer his end, to exaggerate her burthens, to depreciate her successes, and to vilify her character. Nothing had been done, unless the situation of France were exalted in proportion as that of England had been abased. The reader will excuse the citation I make at length from his book; he out-does himself upon this occasion. His confidence is indeed unparalleled, and altogether of the heroic cast:

"If our rival nations were in the same circumstances with ourselves, *the augmentation of our taxes would produce no ill consequences:* if we were obliged to raise our prices, they must, from the same causes, do the like, and could take no advantage by under-selling and under-working us. But the alarming consideration to Great Britain is, *that France is not in the same condition.* Her distresses, during

* It is dearer in some places, and rather cheaper in others; but it must soon all come to a level.

the war, were great, but they were immediate; her want of credit, as has been said, compelled her to impoverish her people, by raising the greatest part of her supplies within the year; *but the burthens she imposed on them were, in a great measure, temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a few years of peace.* She could procure no considerable loans, therefore she has mortgaged no *such oppressive taxes as those Great Britain has imposed in perpetuity for payment of interest.* Peace must, therefore, soon re-establish her commerce and manufactures, especially as the comparative *lightness of taxes*, and the cheapness of living, in that country, must make France an asylum for British manufacturers and artificers." On this the author rests the merit of his whole system. And on this point I will join issue with him. If France is not at least in the *same condition*, even in that very condition which the author falsely represents to be ours, if the very reverse of his proposition be not true, then I will admit his State of the Nation to be just; and all his inferences from that state to be logical and conclusive. It is not surprising, that the author should hazard our opinion of his veracity. That is a virtue on which great statesmen do not perhaps pique themselves so much: but it is somewhat extraordinary, that he should stake on a very poor calculation of chances, all credit for care, for accuracy, and for knowledge of the subject of which he treats. He is rash and inaccurate, because he thinks he writes to a public ignorant and inattentive. But he may find himself in that respect, as in many others, greatly mistaken.

In order to contrast the light and vigorous condition of France with that of England, weak, and sinking under her burthens, he states in his tenth page, that France had raised £.50,314,378 sterling *by taxes within the several years* from the year 1756 to 1762 both inclusive. An Englishman must stand aghast at such a representation: To find France able to *raise within the year* sums little inferiour to all that we were able even to *borrow* on interest with all the resources of the greatest and most established credit in the world! Europe was filled with astonishment when they saw England *borrow* in one year twelve millions. It was thought, and very justly, no small proof of national strength and financial skill, to find a fund for the payment of the interest upon this sum. The interest of this, computed with the one *per cent.* annuities, amounted only to £.600,000 a year. This, I say, was thought a surprising effort even of credit. But this author talks, as of a thing not worth proving, and but just worth observing, that France in one year raised sixteen times that sum without borrowing, and continued to raise sums not far from equal to it for several years together. Suppose some Jacob Henriques had proposed, in the year 1762, to prevent a perpetual charge on the nation by raising ten millions within the year. He would have been considered, not as a harsh financier, who laid a heavy hand on the public; but as a poor visionary, who had run mad on supplies and taxes. They who know that the whole land tax of England, at 4*s.* in the pound, raises but two millions; will not easily apprehend that any such sums as the author has conjured up can be raised even in the most opulent nations. France owed a large debt, and was encumbered with heavy establishments, before that war. The author does not formally deny that she borrowed something in every year of its continuance; let him produce the funds for this astonishing annual addition to all her vast preceding taxes, an addition equal to the whole excise, customs, land and malt taxes of England taken together.

But what must be the reader's astonishment, perhaps his indignation, if he should find that this great financier has fallen into the most unaccountable of all errours, no less an errour than that of mistaking the *identical sums borrowed by France upon interest, for supplies raised within the year.* Can it be conceived that any man only entered into the first rudiments of finance should make so egregious a blunder; should write it, should print it; should carry it to a second edition: should take it not collaterally and incidentally, but lay it down as the corner-stone of his whole system, in such an important point as the comparative states of France and England? But it will be said, that it was his misfortune to be ill-informed. Not at all. A man of any loose general knowledge, and of the most ordinary sagacity, never could have been misinformed in so gross a manner; because he would have immediately rejected so wild and extravagant an account.

The fact is this: the credit of France, bad as it might have been, did enable her (not to raise within the year) but to *borrow* the very sums the author mentions; that is to say, 1,106,916,261 livres, making, in the author's computation, £.50,314,378. The credit of France was low; but it was not annihilated. She did not derive, as our author chooses to assert, any advantages from the debility of her credit. Its consequence was the natural one: she borrowed; but she borrowed upon bad terms, indeed on the most exorbitant usury.

In speaking of a foreign revenue, the very pretence to accuracy would be the most inaccurate thing in the world. Neither the author nor I can with certainty authenticate the information we communicate to the public, nor in an affair of eternal fluctuation arrive at perfect exactness. All we can do, and this we may be expected to do, is to avoid gross errours and blunders of a capital nature. We cannot order the proper officer to lay the accounts before the house. But the reader must judge on the probability of the accounts we lay before him. The author speaks of France as raising her supplies for war by taxes within the year; and of her debt, as a thing scarcely worthy of notice. I affirm that she borrowed large sums in every year; and has thereby accumulated an immense debt. This debt continued after the war infinitely to embarrass her affairs; and to find some means for its reduction was then and has ever since been the first object of her policy. But she has so little succeeded in all her efforts, that the *perpetual* debt of France is at this hour little short of £.100,000,000. sterling; and she stands charged with at least 40,000,000 of English pounds on life-rents and tontines. The annuities paid at this day at the Hotel de Ville of Paris, which are by no means her sole payments of that nature, amount to 139,000,000 of livres, that is, to 6,318,000 pounds; besides *billets au porteur*, and various detached and unfunded debts, to a great amount, and which bear an interest.

At the end of the war, the interest payable on her debt amounted to upwards of seven millions sterling. M. de la Verdy, the last hope of the French finances, was called in, to aid in the reduction of an interest, so light to our author, so intolerably heavy upon those who are to pay it. After many unsuccessful efforts towards reconciling arbitrary reduction with public credit, he was obliged to go the plain high road of power, and to impose a tax of 10 *per cent.* upon a very great part of the capital debt of that kingdom; and this measure of present ease, to the destruction of future credit, produced about £.500,000 a year which was carried to their *Caisse d'amortissement* or sinking fund. But so unfaithfully and unsteadily has this and all the other articles which compose that fund been applied to their purposes, that they have given the state but very little even of present relief, since it is known to the whole world that she is behindhand on every one of her establishments. Since the year 1763, there has been no operation of any consequence on the French finances: and in this enviable condition is France at present with regard to her debt.

Every body knows that the principal of the debt is but a name; the interest is the only thing which can distress a nation. Take this idea, which will not be disputed, and compare the interest paid by England with that paid by France:

Interest paid by France, funded and unfunded, for perpetuity or on lives, after the tax of 10 *per cent.*	£.6,500,000
Interest paid by England, as stated by the author, p. 27 - - - -	£.4,600,000
Interest paid by France exceeds that paid by England - - -	.1,900,000

The author cannot complain, that I state the interest paid by England as too low. He takes it himself as the extremest term. Nobody who knows any thing of the French finances will affirm that I state the interest paid by that kingdom too high. It might be easily proved to amount to a great deal more: even this is near two millions above what is paid by England.

There are three standards to judge of the good conditions of a nation with regard to its finances. 1st, The relief of the people. 2d, The equality of supplies to establishments. 3d, The state of public credit. Try France on all these standards.

Although our author very liberally administers relief to the people of France, its government has not been altogether so gracious. Since the peace, she has taken off but a single *vingtieme*, or shilling in the pound, and some small matter in the capitation. But, if the government has relieved them in one point, it has only burthened them the more heavily in another. The *Taille*,* that grievous and destructive imposition, which all their financiers lament, without being able to remove or to replace, has been augmented no less than six millions of livres, or 270,000 pounds English. A further augmentation of this or other duties is now talked of; and it is certainly necessary to their affairs: so exceedingly remote from either truth or verisimilitude is the author's amazing assertion, *that the burthens of France in the war were in a great measure temporary, and must be greatly diminished by a few years of peace.*

In the next place, if the people of France are not lightened of taxes, so neither is the state disburthened of charges. I speak from very good information, that the annual income

* A tax rated by the intendant in each generality on the presumed fortune of every person below the degree of a gentleman.

of that state is at this day 30 millions of livres, or £.1,350,000 sterling, short of a provision for their ordinary peace establishment; so far are they from the attempt or even hope to discharge any part of the capital of their enormous debt. Indeed under such extreme straitness and distraction labours the whole body of their finances, so far does their charge outrun their supply in every particular, that no man, I believe, who has considered their affairs with any degree of attention or information, but must hourly look for some extraordinary convulsion in that whole system; the effect of which on France, and even on all Europe, it is difficult to conjecture.

In the third point of view, their credit. Let the reader cast his eye on a table of the price of French funds, as they stood a few weeks ago, compared with the state of some of our English stocks, even in their present low condition:

FRENCH.

5 *per cent.* - - - -	63.
4 *per cent.* (not taxed)	57.
3 *per cent.* ditto - -	49.

BRITISH.

Bank stock, 5½ - -	159.
4 *per cent.* cons. - -	100.
3 *per cent.* cons. - -	88.

This state of the funds of France and England is sufficient to convince even prejudice and obstinacy, that if France and England are not in the same condition (as the author affirms they are not) the difference is infinitely to the disadvantage of France. This depreciation of their funds has not much the air of a nation lightening burthens and discharging debts.

Such is the true comparative state of the two kingdoms in those capital points of view. Now as to the nature of the taxes which provide for this debt, as well as for their ordinary establishments, the author has thought proper to affirm that "they are comparatively light;" that "she has mortgaged no such oppressive taxes as ours:" his effrontery on this head is intolerable. Does the author recollect a single tax in England to which something parallel in nature, and as heavy in burthen, does not exist in France; does he not know that the lands of the noblesse are still under the load of the greater part of the old feudal charges, from which the gentry of England have been relieved for upwards of 100 years, and which were in kind, as well as burthen, much worse than our modern land tax? Besides that all the gentry of France serve in the army on very slender pay, and to the utter ruin of their fortunes; all those who are not noble, have their lands heavily taxed. Does he not know that wine, brandy, soap, candles, leather, salt-petre, gunpowder, are taxed in France? Has he not heard that government in France has made a monopoly of that great article of *salt?* that they compel the people to take a certain quantity of it, and at a certain rate, both rate and quantity fixed at the arbitrary pleasure of the imposer?* that they pay in France the *Taille*, an arbitrary imposition on presumed property? that a tax is laid in fact and name, on the same arbitrary standard, upon the acquisitions of their *industry?* and that in France a heavy *capitation-tax* is also paid, from the highest to the very poorest sort of people? have we taxes of such weight, or any thing at all of the compulsion, in the article of *salt?* do we pay any *taillage*, any *faculty-tax*, any *industry-tax?* do we pay any *capitation-tax* whatsoever? I believe the people of London would fall into an agony to hear of such taxes proposed upon them as are paid at Paris. There is not a single article of provision for man or beast, which enters that great city, and is not excised; corn, hay, meal, butcher's-meat, fish, fowls, every thing. I do not here mean to censure the policy of taxes laid on the consumption of great luxurious cities. I only state the fact. We should be with difficulty brought to hear of a tax of 50*s.* upon every ox sold in Smithfield. Yet this tax is paid in Paris. Wine, the lower sort of wine, little better than English small beer, pays 2*d.* a bottle. We indeed tax our beer: but the imposition on small beer is very far from heavy. In no part of England are eatables of any kind the object of taxation. In almost every other country in Europe they are excised, more or less. I have by me the state of the revenues of many of the principal nations on the continent; and, on comparing them with ours, I think I am fairly warranted to assert, that England is the most lightly taxed of any of the great states of Europe. They whose unnatural and sullen joy arises from a contemplation of the distresses of their country, will revolt at this position. But if I am called upon, I will prove it beyond all possibility of dispute; even though this proof should deprive these gentlemen of the singular satis-

* Before the war it was sold to, or rather forced on, the consumer at 11 sous, or about 5*d.* the pound. What it is at present, I am not informed. Even this will appear no trivial imposition. In London, salt may be had at a penny farthing per pound from the last retailer.

faction of considering their country as undone; and though the best civil government, the best constituted, and the best managed revenue that ever the world beheld, should be thoroughly vindicated from their perpetual clamours and complaints. As to our neighbour and rival France, in addition to what I have here suggested, I say, and when the author chooses formally to deny, I shall formally prove it, that her subjects pay more than England, on a computation of the wealth of both countries; that her taxes are more injudiciously and more oppressively imposed; more vexatiously collected; come in a smaller proportion to the royal coffers, and are less applied by far to the public service. I am not one of those who choose to take the author's word for this happy and flourishing condition of the French finances, rather than attend to the changes, the violent pushes and the despair of all her own financiers. Does he choose to be referred for the easy and happy condition of the subject in France to the remonstrances of their own parliaments, written with such an eloquence, feeling, and energy as I have not seen exceeded in any other writings? The author may say, their complaints are exaggerated, and the effects of faction. I answer, that they are the representations of numerous, grave, and most respectable bodies of men, upon the affairs of their own country. But, allowing that discontent and faction may pervert the judgment of such venerable bodies in France, we have as good a right to suppose that the same causes may full as probably have produced from a private, however respectable person, that frightful, and, I trust I have shewn groundless representation of our own affairs in England.

The author is so conscious of the dangerous effects of that representation, that he thinks it necessary, and very necessary it is, to guard against them. He assures us, "that he has not made that display of the difficulties of his country, to expose her counsels to the ridicule of other states, or to provoke a vanquished enemy to insult her; nor to excite the people's rage against their governours, or sink them into a despondency of the public welfare." I readily admit this apology for his intentions. God forbid I should think any man capable of entertaining so execrable and senseless a design. The true cause of his drawing so shocking a picture is no more than this; and it ought rather to claim our pity than excite our indignation; he finds himself out of power; and this condition is intolerable to him. The same sun which gilds all nature, and exhilarates the whole creation, does not shine upon disappointed ambition. It is something that rays out of darkness, and inspires nothing but gloom and melancholy. Men in this deplorable state of mind, find a comfort in spreading the contagion of their spleen. They find an advantage too; for it is a general popular errour to imagine the loudest complainers for the public to be the most anxious for its welfare. If such persons can answer the ends of relief and profit to themselves, they are apt to be careless enough about either the means or the consequences.

Whatever this complainant's motives may be, the effects can by no possibility be other than those which he so strongly, and I hope truly, disclaims all intention of producing. To verify this, the reader has only to consider how dreadful a picture he has drawn in his 32d page of the state of this kingdom; such a picture as, I believe, has hardly been applicable, without some exaggeration, to the most degenerate and undone commonwealth that ever existed. Let this view of things be compared with the prospect of a remedy which he proposes in the page directly opposite and the subsequent. I believe no man living could have imagined it possible, except for the sake of burlesquing a subject, to propose remedies so ridiculously disproportionate to the evil, so full of uncertainty in their operation, and depending for their success in every step upon the happy event of so many new, dangerous, and visionary projects. It is not amiss, that he has thought proper to give the public some little notice of what they may expect from his friends, when our affairs shall be committed to their management. Let us see how the accounts of disease and remedy are balanced in his State of the Nation. In the first place, on the side of evils, he states, "an impoverished and heavily burthened public. A declining trade and decreasing specie. The power of the crown never so much extended over the great; but the great without influence over the lower sort. Parliament losing its reverence with the people. The voice of the multitude set up against the sense of the legislature; a people luxurious and licentious, impatient of rule, and despising all authority. Government relaxed in every sinew, and a corrupt selfish spirit pervading the whole. An opinion of many, that the form of government is not worth contending for. No attachment in the bulk of the people towards the constitution. No reverence for the customs of our ancestors. No attachment but to private interest, nor any zeal but for selfish gratifications. Trade and manufactures going to ruin. Great Britain in danger of becoming tributary to

France, and the descent of the crown dependent on her pleasure. Ireland, in case of a war, to become a prey to France; and Great Britain, unable to recover Ireland, cede it by treaty, (the author never can think of a treaty without making cessions,) in order to purchase peace for herself. The colonies left exposed to the ravages of a domestic, or the conquest of a foreign enemy."—Gloomy enough, God knows. The author well observes,* *that a mind not totally devoid of feeling cannot look upon such a prospect without horrour; and an heart capable of humanity must be unable to bear its description.* He ought to have added, that no man of common discretion ought to have exhibited it to the public, if it were true; or of common honesty, if it were false.

But now for the comfort; the day-star which is to arise in our hearts; the author's grand scheme for totally reversing this dismal state of things, and making us "happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war and flourishing in peace."†

In this great work he proceeds with a facility equally astonishing and pleasing. Never was financier less embarrassed by the burthen of establishments, or with the difficulty of finding ways and means. If an establishment is troublesome to him, he lops off at a stroke just as much of it as he chooses. He mows down, without giving quarter, or assigning reason, army, navy, ordnance, ordinary, extraordinaries; nothing can stand before him. Then, when he comes to provide, Amalthea's horn is in his hands; and he pours out with an inexhaustible bounty, taxes, duties, loans, and revenues, without uneasiness to himself, or burthen to the public. Insomuch that, when we consider the abundance of his resources, we cannot avoid being surprised at his extraordinary attention to savings. But it is all the exuberance of his goodness.

This book has so much of a certain tone of power, that one would be almost tempted to think it written by some person who had been high in office. A man is generally rendered somewhat a worse reasoner for having been a minister. In private, the assent of listening and obsequious friends; in public, the venal cry and prepared vote of a passive senate, confirm him in habits of begging the question with impunity, and asserting without thinking himself obliged to prove. Had it not been for some such habits, the author could never have expected that we should take his estimate for a peace establishment solely on his word.

This estimate which he gives,‡ is the great groundwork of his plan for the national redemption; and it ought to be well and firmly laid, or what must become of the superstructure? One would have thought the natural method in a plan of reformation would be, to take the present existing estimates as they stand; and then to show what may be practicably and safely defalcated from them. This would, I say, be the natural course; and what would be expected from a man of business. But this author takes a very different method. For the ground of his speculation of a present peace establishment, he resorts to a former speculation of the same kind, which was in the mind of the minister of the year 1764. Indeed it never existed any where else.§ "The plan," says he, with his usual ease, "has been already formed, and the outline drawn, by the administration of 1764. I shall attempt to fill up the void and obliterated parts, and trace its operation. The standing expense of the present (his projected) peace establishment, *improved by the experience of the two last years, may be thus estimated;*" and he estimates it at £.3,468,161.

Here too it would be natural to expect some reasons for condemning the subsequent actual establishments, which have so much transgressed the limits of his plan of 1764, as well as some arguments in favour of his new project; which has in some articles exceeded, in others fallen short, but on the whole is much below his old one. Hardly a word on any of these points, the only points however that are in the least essential; for unless you assign reasons for the increase or diminution of the several articles of public charge, the playing at establishments and estimates is an amusement of no higher order, and of much less ingenuity, than *Questions and commands*, or *What is my thought like?* To bring more distinctly under the reader's view this author's strange method of proceeding, I will lay before him the three schemes; *viz.* the idea of the ministers in 1764, the actual estimates of the two last years as given by the author himself, and lastly the new project of his political millennium:

Plan of establishment for 1764, as by Considerations, p. 43,	*£.3,609,700
Medium of 1767 and 1768, as by State of the Nation, p. 29 and 30, - - - -	3,919,375
Present peace establishment, as	

* P. 31. † P. 33. ‡ P. 33. § P. 33.

‖ The figures in the Considerations are wrong cast up; it should be £.3,608 700.

by the project in State of the Nation, p. 33, - - - £3,468,161

It is not from any thing our author has any where said, that you are enabled to find the ground, much less the justification, of the immense difference between these several systems: you must compare them yourself, article by article; no very pleasing employment, by the way, to compare the agreement or disagreement of two chimeras. I now only speak of the comparison of his own two projects. As to the latter of them, it differs from the former, by having some of the articles diminished, and others increased.* I find the chief article of reduction arises from the smaller deficiency of land and malt, and of the annuity funds, which he brings down to £.295,561 in his new estimate, from £.502,400, which he had allowed for those articles in the Considerations. With this *reduction*, owing, as it must be, merely to a smaller deficiency of funds, he has nothing at all to do. It can be no work and no merit of his. But with regard to the *increase*, the matter is very different. It is all his own; the public is loaded (for any thing we can see to the contrary) entirely *gratis*. The chief articles of the increase are on the navy,† and on the army and ordnance extraordinaries; the navy being estimated in his *State of the Nation* £.50,000 a year more, and the army and ordnance extraordinaries £.40,000 more, than he had thought proper to allow for them in that estimate in his *Considerations*, which he makes the foundation of his present project. He has given no sort of reason, stated no sort of necessity, for this additional allowance, either in the one article or the other. What is still stronger, he admits that his allowance for the army and ordnance extras is too great, and expressly refers you to the *Considerations*;‡ where, far from giving £.75,000 a year to that service as the *State of the Nation* has done, the author apprehends his own scanty provision of £.35,000 to be by far too considerable, and thinks it may well admit of further reductions.§ Thus, according to his own principles, this great œconomist falls into a vicious prodigality; and is as far in his estimate from a consistency with his own principles as with the real nature of the services.

Still, however, his present establishment differs from its archetype of 1764, by being, though raised in particular parts, upon the whole about £.141,000 smaller. It is improved, he tells us, by the experience of the two last years. One would have concluded that the peace establishment of these two years had been less than that of 1764, in order to suggest to the author his improvements, which enabled him to reduce it. But how does that turn out?

Peace establishment‖ 1767 and 1768, medium,	£.3,919,375
Ditto, estimate in the Considerations, for 1764,	3,609,700
Difference	£.309,675

A vast increase instead of diminution. The experience then of the two last years ought naturally to have given the idea of an heavier establishment; but this writer is able to diminish by increasing, and to draw the effects of subtraction from the operations of addition. By means of these new powers, he may certainly do whatever he pleases. He is indeed moderate enough in the use of them, and condescends to settle his establishments at £.3,468,161 a year.

However, he has not yet done with it; he has further ideas of saving, and new resources

* Considerations, p. 43. State of the Nation, p. 32.

† Ibid. ibid. ‡ P. 34.

§ The author of the State of the Nation, p. 34, informs us, that the sum of £.75,000, allowed by him for the extras of the army and ordnance, is far less than was allowed for the same service in the years 1767 and 1768. It is so undoubtedly, and by at least £.200,000. He sees that he cannot abide by the plan of the Considerations in this point, nor is he willing wholly to give it up. Such an enormous difference as that between £.35,000 and £.300,000 puts him to a stand. Should he adopt the latter plan, of increased expense, he must then confess that he had, on a former occasion, egregiously trifled with the public; at the same time all his future promises of reduction must fall to the ground. If he stuck to the £.35,000, he was sure that every one must expect from him some account how this monstrous charge came to continue ever since the war, when it was clearly unnecessary; how all those successions of ministers (his own included) came to pay it, and why his great friend in Parliament, and his partisans without doors, came not to pursue to ruin, at least to utter shame, the authors of so groundless and scandalous a profusion. In this strait he took a middle way; and, to come nearer the real state of the service, he outbid the Considerations, at one stroke, £.40,000; at the same time he hints to you, that you may *expect* some benefit also from the original plan. But the author of the Considerations will not suffer him to escape it. He has pinned him down to his £.35,000; for that is the sum he has chosen, not as what he thinks will probably be required, but as making the most ample allowance for every possible contingency. See that author, p. 42 and 43.

‖ He has done great injustice to the establishment of 1768; but I have not here time for this discussion; nor is it necessary to this argument.

of revenue. These additional savings are principally two: 1st, *It is to be hoped*,* says he, that the sum of £.250,000 (which in the estimate, he allows for the deficiency of land and malt) will be less by £.37,924.†

2d, That the sum of £.20,000 allowed for the Foundling Hospital, and £.1,800 for American surveys, will soon cease to be necessary, as the services will be completed.

What follows with regard to the resources,‡ is very well worthy the reader's attention. "Of this estimate," says he, "upwards of £.300,000 will be for the plantation service; and that sum, *I hope*, the people of Ireland and the colonies *might be induced* to take off Great Britain, and defray between them, in the proportion of £.200,000 by the colonies, and £.100,000 by Ireland."

Such is the whole of this mighty scheme. Take his reduced estimate, and his further reductions, and his resources all together, and the result will be; He will *certainly* lower the provision made for the navy. He will cut off largely (God knows what or how) from the army and ordnance extraordinaries. He may be *expected* to cut off more. He *hopes* that the deficiencies on land and malt will be less than usual; and he *hopes* that America and Ireland might be *induced* to take off £.300,000 of our annual charges.

If any of these Hopes, Mights, Insinuations, Expectations and Inducements, should fail him, there will be a formidable gaping breach in his whole project. If all of them should fail, he has left the nation without a glimmering of hope in this thick night of terrours which he has thought fit to spread about us. If every one of them, which, attended with success, would signify any thing to our revenue, can have no effect but to add to our distractions and dangers, we shall be if possible in a still worse condition from his projects of cure than he represents us from our original disorders.

* P. 34.

† In making up this account, he falls into a surprising errour of arithmetic. "The deficiency of the land tax in the year 1754 and 1755,* when it was at 2s. amounted to no more, on a medium, than £.49,372; to which, if we add *half the sum*, it will give us £.79,058 as the peace deficiency at 2s.

Total, - - -	£.49,372
Add the half, - -	24,686
	£.74,058

Which he makes £.79,058. This is indeed in disfavour of his argument; but we shall see that he has ways, by other errours, of reimbursing himself.

‡ P. 34.

* P. 28.

Before we examine into the consequences of these schemes, and the probability of these savings, let us suppose them all real and all safe, and then see what it is they amount to, and how he reasons on them:

Deficiency on land and malt, less by - - -	£.37,000
Foundling Hospital - -	20,000
American surveys, - -	1,800
	£.58,800

This is the amount of the only articles of saving he specifies; and yet he chooses to assert "that we may venture on the credit of them to reduce the standing expenses of the estimate (from £.3,468,161) to £.3,300,000;"§ that is, for a saving of £.58,000, he is not ashamed to take credit for a defalcation from his own ideal establishment in a sum of no less than £.168,161! Suppose even that we were to take up the estimate of the Considerations, (which is however abandoned in the State of the Nation,) and reduce his £.75,000 extraordinaries to the original £.35,000, still all these savings joined together give us but £.98,800; that is, near £.70,000 short of the credit he calls for, and for which he has neither given any reason, nor furnished any data whatsoever for others to reason upon.

Such are his savings, as operating on his own project of a peace establishment. Let us now consider them as they affect the existing establishment and our actual services. He tells us, the sum allowed in his estimate for the navy is "£.69,321 less than the grant for that service in 1767; but in that grant £.30,000 was included for the purchase of hemp, and a saving of about £.25,000 was made in that year." The author has got some secret in arithmetic. These two sums put together amount, in the ordinary way of computing, to £.55,000, and not to £.69,321. On what principle has he chosen to take credit for £.14,321 more? To what this strange inaccuracy is owing, I cannot possibly comprehend; nor is it very material, where the logic is so bad, and the policy so erroneous, whether the arithmetic be just or otherwise. But in a scheme for making this nation "happy at home and respected abroad, formidable in war and flourishing in peace," it is surely a little unfortunate for us, that he has picked out the *Navy*, as the very first object of his œconominal experiments. Of all the public services, that of the

§ P. 43.

navy is the one in which tampering may be of the greatest danger, which can worst be supplied upon an emergency, and of which any failure draws after it the longest and heaviest train of consequences. I am far from saying, that this or any service ought not to be conducted with œconomy. But I will never suffer the sacred name of œconomy to be bestowed upon arbitrary defalcation of charge. The author tells us himself, "that to suffer the navy to rot in harbour for want of repairs and marines, would be to invite destruction." It would be so. When the author talks therefore of savings on the navy estimate, it is incumbent on him to let us know, not what sums he will cut off, but what branch of that service he deems superfluous. Instead of putting us off with unmeaning generalities, he ought to have stated what naval force, what naval works, and what naval stores, with the lowest estimated expense, are necessary to keep our marine in a condition commensurate to its great ends. And this too not for the contracted and deceitful space of a single year, but for some reasonable term. Every body knows that many charges cannot be in their nature regular or annual. In the year 1767 a stock of hemp, &c. was to be laid in; that charge intermits, but it does not end. Other charges of other kinds take their place. Great works are now carrying on at Portsmouth, but not of greater magnitude than utility; and they must be provided for. A year's estimate is therefore no just idea at all of a permanent peace establishment. Had the author opened this matter upon these plain principles, a judgment might have been formed, how far he had contrived to reconcile national defence with public œconomy. Till he has done it, those who had rather depend on any man's reason than the greatest man's authority, will not give him credit on this head, for the saving of a single shilling. As to those savings which are already made, or in course of being made, whether right or wrong, he has nothing at all to do with them; they can be no part of his project, considered as a plan of reformation. I greatly fear that the errour has not lately been on the side of profusion.

Another head is the saving on the army and ordnance extraordinaries, particularly in the American branch. What or how much reduction may be made, none of us, I believe, can with any fairness pretend to say; very little, I am convinced. The state of America is extremely unsettled; more troops have been sent thither; new dispositions have been made; and this augmentation of number, and change of disposition, has rarely, I believe, the effect of lessening the bill for extraordinaries, which, if not this year, yet in the next we must certainly feel. Care has not been wanting to introduce œconomy into that part of the service. The author's great friend has made, I admit, some regulations; his immediate successors have made more and better. This part will be handled more ably and more minutely at another time: but no one can cut down this bill of extraordinaries at his pleasure. The author has given us nothing, but his word, for any certain or considerable reduction; and this we ought to be the more cautious in taking, as he has promised great savings in his *Considerations*, which he has not chosen to abide by in his *State of the Nation*.

On this head also of the American extraordinaries, he can take credit for nothing. As to his next, the lessening of the deficiency of the land and malt tax, particularly of the malt tax; any person the least conversant in that subject cannot avoid a smile. This deficiency arises from charge of collection, from anticipation, and from defective produce. What has the author said on the reduction of any head of this deficiency upon the land tax? On these points he is absolutely silent. As to the deficiency on the malt tax, which is chiefly owing to a defective produce, he has, and can have nothing to propose. If this deficiency should be lessened by the increase of malting in any years more than in others, (as it is a greatly fluctuating object,) how much of this obligation shall we owe to this author's ministry? will it not be the case under any administration? must it not go to the general service of the year, in some way or other, let the finances be in whose hands they will? But why take credit for so extremely reduced a deficiency at all? I can tell him he has no rational ground for it in the produce of the year 1767; and I suspect will have full as little reason from the produce of the year 1768. That produce may indeed become greater, and the deficiency of course will be less. It may too be far otherwise. A fair and judicious financier will not, as this writer has done, for the sake of making out a specious account, select a favourable year or two, at remote periods, and ground his calculations on those. In 1768 he will not take the deficiencies of 1753 and 1754 for his standard. Sober men have hitherto (and must continue this course, to preserve this character) taken indifferently the mediums of the years immediately preceding. But a person who has a scheme from which he promises much to the public ought to be still more cautious; he should ground his speculation rather on the

lowest mediums; because all new schemes are known to be subject to some defect or failure not foreseen; and which therefore every prudent opposer will be ready to allow for, in order to lay his foundation as low and as solid as possible. Quite contrary is the practice of some politicians. They first propose savings, which they well know cannot be made, in order to get a reputation for œconomy. In due time they assume another, but a different method, by providing for the service they had before cut off or straitened, and which they can then very easily prove to be necessary. In the same spirit they raise magnificent ideas of revenue on funds which they know to be insufficient. Afterwards, who can blame them, if they do not satisfy the public desires? They are great artificers; but they cannot work without materials.

These are some of the little arts of great statesmen. To such we leave them, and follow where the author leads us, to his next resource, the Foundling Hospital. Whatever particular virtue there is in the mode of this saving, there seems to be nothing at all new, and indeed nothing wonderfully important in it. The sum annually voted for the support of the Foundling Hospital has been in a former parliament limited to the establishment of the children then in the hospital. When they are apprenticed, this provision will cease. It will therefore fall in more or less at different times; and will at length cease entirely. But, until it does, we cannot reckon upon it as the saving on the establishment of any given year: nor can any one conceive how the author comes to mention this, any more than some other articles, as a part of a *new* plan of œconomy which is to retrieve our affairs. This charge will indeed cease in its own time. But will no other succeed to it? Has he ever known the public free from some contingent charge, either for the just support of royal dignity, or for national magnificence, or for public charity, or for public service? does he choose to flatter his readers that no such will ever return? or does he in good earnest declare, that let the reason, or necessity, be what they will, he is resolved not to provide for such services?

Another resource of œconomy yet remains, for he gleans the field very closely, £.1,800 for the American surveys. Why what signifies a dispute about trifles? he shall have it. But while he is carrying it off, I shall just whisper in his ear, that neither the saving that is allowed, nor that which is doubted of, can at all belong to that future proposed administration, whose touch is to cure all our evils. Both the one and the other belong equally (as indeed all the rest do) to the present administration, to any administration; because they are the gift of time, and not the bounty of the exchequer.

I have now done with all the minor preparatory parts of the author's scheme, the several articles of saving which he proposes. At length comes the capital operation, his new resources. Three hundred thousand pounds a year from America and Ireland.—Alas! alas! if that too should fail us, what will become of this poor undone nation? The author, in a tone of great humility, *hopes* they may be induced to pay it. Well, if that be all, we may hope so too: and for any light he is pleased to give us into the ground of this hope, and the ways and means of this inducement, here is a speedy end both of the question and the revenue.

It is the constant custom of this author, in all his writings, to take it for granted, that he has given you a revenue, whenever he can point out to you where you may have money, if you can contrive how to get at it; and this seems to be the master-piece of his financial ability. I think, however, in his way of proceeding, he has behaved rather like an harsh step-dame, than a kind nursing mother to his country. Why stop at £.300,000? If his state of things be at all founded, America and Ireland are much better able to pay £.600,000, than we are to satisfy ourselves with half that sum. However, let us forgive him this one instance of tenderness towards Ireland and the colonies.

He spends a vast deal of time,* in an endeavour to prove, that Ireland is able to bear greater impositions. He is of opinion, that the poverty of the lower class of people there is, in a great measure, owing to *a want* of judicious taxes; that a land tax will enrich her tenants; that taxes are paid in England which are not paid there; that the colony trade is increased above £.100,000 since the peace; that she *ought* to have further indulgence in that trade; and ought to have further privileges in the woollen manufacture. From these premises, of what she has, what she has not, and what she ought to have, he infers that Ireland will contribute £.100,000 towards the extraordinaries of the American establishment.

I shall make no objections whatsoever, logical or financial, to this reasoning: many occur; but they would lead me from my purpose, from which I do not intend to be diverted, because it seems to me of no small importance. It will

* P. 35.

be just enough to hint, what I dare say many readers have before observed, that when any man proposes new taxes in a country with which he is not personally conversant by residence or office, he ought to lay open its situation much more minutely and critically than this author has done, or than perhaps he is able to do. He ought not to content himself with saying that a single article of her trade is increased £.100,000 a year; he ought, if he argues from the increase of trade to the increase of taxes, to state the whole trade, and not one branch of trade only; he ought to enter fully into the state of its remittances, and the course of its exchange; he ought likewise to examine whether all its establishments are increased or diminished; and whether it incurs or discharges debts annually. But I pass over all this; and am content to ask a few plain questions.

Does the author then seriously mean to propose in parliament a land tax, or any tax for £.100,000 a year upon Ireland? If he does, and if fatally, by his temerity and our weakness, he should succeed; then I say he will throw the whole empire from one end of it to the other into mortal convulsions. What is it that can satisfy the furious and perturbed mind of this man; is it not enough for him that such projects have alienated our colonies from the mother country, and not to propose violently to tear our sister kingdom also from our side, and to convince every dependent part of the empire, that, when a little money is to be raised, we have no sort of regard to their ancient customs, their opinions, their circumstances, or their affections? He has however a *douceur* for Ireland in his pocket; benefits in trade by opening the woollen manufacture to that nation. A very right idea in my opinion; but not more strong in reason, than likely to be opposed by the most powerful and most violent of all local prejudices and popular passions. First, a fire is already kindled by his schemes of taxation in America; he then proposes one which will set all Ireland in a blaze; and his way of quenching both is by a plan which may kindle perhaps ten times a greater flame in Britain.

Will the author pledge himself, previously to his proposal of such a tax, to carry this enlargement of the Irish trade; if he does not, then the tax will be certain; the benefit will be less than problematical. In this view, his compensation to Ireland vanishes into smoke; the tax, to their prejudices, will appear stark naked in the light of an act of arbitrary power and oppression. But, if he should propose the benefit and tax together, then the people of Ireland, a very high and spirited people, would think it the worst bargain in the world. They would look upon the one as wholly vitiated and poisoned by the other; and, if they could not be separated, would infallibly resist them both together. Here would be taxes indeed, amounting to an handsome sum; £.100,000 very effectually voted, and passed through the best and most authentic forms; but how to be collected? —This is his perpetual manner. One of his projects depends for success upon another project, and this upon a third, all of them equally visionary. His finance is like the Indian philosophy; his earth is poised on the horns of a bull, his bull stands upon an elephant, his elephant is supported by a tortoise; and so on for ever.

As to his American £.200,000 a year, he is satisfied to repeat gravely, as he has done an hundred times before, that the Americans are able to pay it. Well, and what then? does he lay open any part of his plan how they may be compelled to pay it, without plunging ourselves into calamities that outweigh tenfold the proposed benefit? or does he shew how they may be induced to submit to it quietly? or does he give any satisfaction concerning the mode of levying it, in commercial colonies one of the most important and difficult of all considerations? Nothing like it. To the stamp act, whatever its excellencies may be, I think he will not in reality recur, or even choose to assert that he means to do so, in case his minister should come again into power. If he does, I will predict that some of the fastest friends of that minister will desert him upon this point. As to port duties, he has damned them all in the lump, by declaring them "contrary to the first principles of colonization, and not less prejudicial to the interests of Great Britain than to those of the colonies."* Surely this single observation of his ought to have taught him a little caution; he ought to have begun to doubt, whether there is not something in the nature of commercial colonies, which renders them an unfit object of taxation; when port duties, so large a fund of revenue in all countries, are by himself found, in this case, not only improper, but destructive. However he has here pretty well narrowed the field of taxation. Stamp act, hardly to be resumed. Port duties, mischievous. Excises, I believe, he will scarcely think worth the collection (if any revenue should be so) in America. Land tax (notwithstanding his opinion of its immense use to agriculture) he will not directly propose, before he has thought again and again on the subject

* P. 37.

Indeed he very readily recommends it for Ireland, and seems to think it not improper for America; because, he observes, they already raise most of their taxes internally, including this tax. A most curious reason truly! because their lands are already heavily burthened, he thinks it right to burthen them still further. But he will recollect, for surely he cannot be ignorant of it, that the lands of America are not, as in England, let at a rent certain in money, and therefore cannot, as here, be taxed at a certain pound rate. They value them in gross among themselves; and none but themselves in their several districts can value them. Without their hearty concurrence and co-operation, it is evident, we cannot advance a step in the assessing or collecting any land tax. As to the taxes which in some places the Americans pay by the acre, they are merely duties of regulation: they are small; and to increase them, notwithstanding the secret virtues of a land tax, would be the most effectual means of preventing that cultivation they are intended to promote. Besides, the whole country is heavily in arrear already for land taxes and quit rents. They have different methods of taxation in the different provinces, agreeable to their several local circumstances. In New England by far the greatest part of their revenue is raised by *faculty taxes* and *capitations*. Such is the method in many others. It is obvious that parliament, unassisted by the colonies themselves, cannot take so much as a single step in this mode of taxation. Then what tax is it he will impose? Why, after all the boasting speeches and writings of his faction for these four years, after all the vain expectations which they have held out to a deluded public, this their great advocate, after twisting the subject every way, after writhing himself in every posture, after knocking at every door, is obliged fairly to abandon every mode of taxation whatsoever in America. He thinks* it the best method for parliament to impose the sum, and reserve the account to itself, leaving the mode of taxation to the colonies. But how and in what proportion? what does the author say? O, not a single syllable on this the most material part of the whole question. Will he, in parliament, undertake to settle the proportions of such payments from Nova Scotia to Nevis, in no fewer than six and twenty different countries, varying in almost every possible circumstance one from another? if he does, I tell him, he adjourns his revenue to a very long day. If he leaves it to themselves to settle these proportions, he adjourns it to doomsday.

* P. 37, 38.

Then what does he get by this method on the side of acquiescence? will the people of America relish this course, of giving and granting and applying their money, the better because their assemblies are made commissioners of the taxes? This is far worse than all his former projects; for here, if the assemblies shall refuse, or delay, or be negligent, or fraudulent, in this new-imposed duty, we are wholly without remedy; and neither our custom-house officers, nor our troops, nor our armed ships can be of the least use in the collection. No idea can be more contemptible (I will not call it an oppressive one, the harshness is lost in the folly) than that of proposing to get any revenue from the Americans but by their freest and most cheerful consent. Most monied men know their own interest right well; and are as able as any financier, in the valuation of risks. Yet I think this financier will scarcely find that adventurer hardy enough, at any premium, to advance a shilling upon a vote of such taxes. Let him name the man or set of men, that would do it. This is the only proof of the value of revenues; what would an interested man rate them at? His subscription would be at ninety-nine *per cent.* discount the very first day of its opening. Here is our only national security from ruin; a security upon which no man in his senses would venture a shilling of his fortune. Yet he puts down those articles as gravely in his supply for the peace establishment, as if the money had been all fairly lodged in the exchequer.

American revenue,	- -	£.200,000
Ireland,	- - -	100,000

Very handsome indeed! but if supply is to be got in such a manner, farewell the lucrative mystery of finance! If you are to be credited for savings, without shewing how, why, or with what safety, they are to be made; and for revenues, without specifying on what articles, or by what means, or at what expense, they are to be collected; there is not a clerk in a public office who may not outbid this author, or his friend, for the department of chancellor of the exchequer; not an apprentice in the city, that will not strike out, with the same advantages, the same, or a much larger, plan of supply.

Here is the whole of what belongs to the author's scheme for saving us from impending destruction. Take it even in its most favourable point of view, as a thing within possibility; and imagine what must be the wisdom of this gentleman, or his opinion of ours, who could first think of representing this nation in

such a state, as no friend can look upon but with horror, and scarce an enemy without compassion, and afterwards of diverting themselves with such inadequate, impracticable, puerile methods for our relief? If these had been the dreams of some unknown, unnamed, and nameless writer, they would excite no alarm; their weakness had been an antidote to their malignity. But as they are universally believed to be written by the hand, or what amounts to the same thing, under the immediate direction, of a person who has been in the management of the highest affairs, and may soon be in the same situation, I think it is not to be reckoned among our greatest consolations, that the yet remaining power of this kingdom is to be employed in an attempt to realize notions that are at once so frivolous, and so full of danger. That consideration will justify me in dwelling a little longer on the difficulties of the nation, and the solutions of our author.

I am then persuaded that he cannot be in the least alarmed about our situation, let his outcry be what he pleases. I will give him a reason for my opinion, which, I think, he cannot dispute. All that he bestows upon the nation, which it does not possess without him, and supposing it all sure money, amounts to no more than a sum of £.300,000 a year. This, he thinks, will do the business completely ,and render us flourishing at home, and respectable abroad. If the option between glory and shame, if our salvation or destruction, depended on this sum, it is impossible that he should have been active, and made a merit of that activity, in taking off a shilling in the pound of the land tax, which came up to his grand desideratum, and upwards of £.100,000 more. By this manœuvre, he left our trade, navigation, and manufactures, on the verge of destruction, our finances in ruin, our credit expiring, Ireland on the point of being ceded to France, the colonies of being torn to pieces, the succession of the crown at the mercy of our great rival, and the kingdom itself on the very point of becoming tributary to that haughty power. All this for want of £300,000; for I defy the reader to point out any other revenue, or any other precise and defined scheme of politics, which he assigns for our redemption.

I know that two things may be said in his defence, as bad reasons are always at hand in an indifferent cause; that he was not sure the money would be applied as he thinks it ought to be, by the present ministers. I think as ill of them as he does to the full. They have done very near as much mischief as they can do, to a constitution so robust as this is. Nothing can make them more dangerous, but that, as they are already in general composed of his disciples and instruments, they may add to the public calamity of their own measures, the adoption of his projects. But be the ministers what they may, the author knows that they could not avoid applying this £.450,000 to the service of the establishment, as faithfully as he, or any other minister, could do. I say they could not avoid it, and have no merit at all for the application. But supposing that they should greatly mismanage this revenue. Here is a good deal of room for mistake and prodigality before you come to the edge of ruin. The difference between the amount of that real and his imaginary revenue is, £.150,000 a year, at least; a tolerable sum for them to play with: this might compensate the difference between the author's œconomy and their profusion; and still, notwithstanding their vices and ignorance, the nation might be saved. The author ought also to recollect, that a good man would hardly deny, even to the worst of ministers, the means of doing their duty; especially in a crisis when our being depended on supplying them with some means or other. In such a case their penury of mind, in discovering resources, would make it rather the more necessary, not to strip such poor providers of the little stock they had in hand.

Besides, here is another subject of distress, and a very serious one, which puts us again to a stand. The author may possibly not come into power, (I only state the possibility:) he may not always continue in it; and if the contrary to all this should fortunately for us happen, what insurance on his life can be made for a sum adequate to his loss? Then we are thus unluckily situated, that the *chance* of an American and Irish revenue of £.300,000 to be managed by him, is to save us from ruin two or three years hence at best, to make us happy at home and glorious abroad; and the actual possession of £.400,000 English taxes cannot so much as protract our ruin without him. So we are staked on four chances; his power, its permanence, the success of his projects, and the duration of his life. Any one of these failing, we are gone. *Propria hæc si dona fuissent!* This is no unfair representation; ultimately all hangs on his life, because, in his account of every set of men that have held or supported administration, he finds neither virtue nor ability in any but himself. Indeed he pays (through their measures) some compliments to Lord Bute and Lord Despenser. But to the latter, this is, I suppose, but a civility to old acquaintance: to the former, a little stroke of

politics. We may therefore fairly say, that our only hope is his life; and he has, to make it the more so, taken care to cut off any resource which we possessed independent of him.

In the next place it may be said, to excuse any appearance of inconsistency between the author's actions and his declarations, that he thought it right to relieve the landed interest, and lay the burthen where it ought to lie, on the colonies. What! to take off a revenue so necessary to our being, before any thing whatsoever was acquired in the place of it? In prudence, he ought to have waited at least for the first quarter's receipt of the new anonymous American revenue, and Irish land tax. Is there something so specific for our disorders in American, and something so poisonous in English money, that one is to heal, the other to destroy us? To say that the landed interest *could* not continue to pay it for a year or two longer, is more than the author will attempt to prove. To say that they *would* pay it no longer, is to treat the landed interest, in my opinion, very scurvily. To suppose that the gentry, clergy, and freeholders of England do not rate the commerce, the credit, the religion, the liberty, the independency of their country, and the succession of their crown, at a shilling in the pound land tax! They never gave him reason to think so meanly of them. And, if I am rightly informed, when that measure was debated in parliament, a very different reason was assigned by the author's great friend, as well as by others, for that reduction: one very different from the critical and almost desperate state of our finances. Some people then endeavoured to prove, that the reduction might be made without detriment to the national credit, or the due support of a proper peace establishment; otherwise it is obvious that the reduction could not be defended in argument. So that this author cannot despair so much of the commonwealth, without this American and Irish revenue, as he pretends to do. If he does, the reader sees how handsomely he has provided for us, by voting away one revenue, and by giving us a pamphlet on the other.

I do not mean to blame the relief which was then given by parliament to the land. It was grounded on very weighty reasons. The administration contended only for its continuance for a year, in order to have the merit of taking off the shilling in the pound immediately before the elections; and thus to bribe the freeholders of England with their own money.

It is true, the author, in his estimate of ways and means, takes credit for £.400,000 a year, *Indian revenue*. But he will not very positively insist, that we should put this revenue to the account of his plans or his power; and for a very plain reason: we are already near two years in possession of it. By what means we came to that possession, is a pretty long story; however, I shall give nothing more than a short abstract of the proceeding, in order to see whether the author will take to himself any part in that measure.

The fact is this; the East India company had for a good while solicited the ministry for a negotiation, by which they proposed to pay largely for some advantages in their trade, and for the renewal of their charter. This had been the former method of transacting with that body. Government having only leased the monopoly for short terms, the company has been obliged to resort to it frequently for renewals. These two parties had always negotiated (on the true principle of credit) not as government and subject, but as equal dealers, on the footing of mutual advantage. The public had derived great benefit from such dealing. But at that time new ideas prevailed. The ministry, instead of listening to the proposals of that company, chose to set up a claim of the crown to their possessions. The original plan seems to have been, to get the house of commons to compliment the crown with a sort of juridical declaration of a title to the company's acquisitions in India; which the crown, on its part, with the best air in the world, was to bestow upon the public. Then it would come to the turn of the house of commons again to be liberal and grateful to the crown. The civil list debts were to be paid off; with perhaps a pretty augmentation of income. All this was to be done on the most public-spirited principles, and with a politeness and mutual interchange of good offices, that could not but have charmed. But what was best of all, these civilities were to be without a farthing of charge to either of the kind and obliging parties.—The East India company was to be covered with infamy and disgrace, and at the same time was to pay the whole bill.

In consequence of this scheme, the terrours of a parliamentary inquiry were hung over them. A judicature was assered in parliament to try this question. But lest this judicial character should chance to inspire certain stubborn ideas of law and right, it was argued, that the judicature was arbitrary, and ought not to determine by the rules of law, but by their opinion of policy and expediency. Nothing exceeded the violence of some of the managers, except their impotence. They were bewildered by their passions, and by their want of knowledge

or want of consideration of the subject. The more they advanced, the further they found themselves from their object.—All things ran into confusion. The ministers quarrelled among themselves. They disclaimed one another. They suspended violence, and shrunk from treaty. The inquiry was almost at its last gasp; when some active persons of the company were given to understand, that this hostile proceeding was only set up *in terrorem;* that government was far from an intention of seizing upon the possessions of the company. Administration, they said, was sensible, that the idea was in every light full of absurdity; and that such a seizure was not more out of their power, than remote from their wishes; and therefore, if the company would come in a liberal manner to the house, they certainly could not fail of putting a speedy end to this disagreeable business, and of opening the way to an advantageous treaty.

On this hint the company acted: they came at once to a resolution of getting rid of the difficulties which arose from the complication of their trade with their revenue; a step which despoiled them of their best defensive armour, and put them at once into the power of administration. They threw their whole stock of every kind, the revenue, the trade, and even their debt from government, into one fund, which they computed on the surest grounds would amount to £.800,000, with a large probable surplus for the payment of debt. Then they agreed to divide this sum in equal portions between themselves and the public, £.400,000 to each. This gave to the proprietors of that fund an annual augmentation of no more than £.80,000 dividend. They ought to receive from government £.120,000 for the loss of their capital. So that, in fact, the whole, which on this plan they reserved to themselves, from their vast revenues, from their extensive trade, and in consideration of the great risks and mighty expenses which purchased these advantages, amounted to no more than £.280,000, whilst government was to receive, as I said, £.400,000.

This proposal was thought by themselves liberal indeed; and they expected the highest applauses for it. However, their reception was very different from their expectations. When they brought up their plan to the house of commons, the offer, as it was natural, of £.400,000, was very well relished. But nothing could be more disgustful than the £.80,000 which the company had divided among themselves. A violent tempest of public indignation and fury rose against them. The heads of people turned. The company was held well able to pay £.400,000 a year to government; but bankrupts, if they attempted to divide the fifth part of it among themselves. An *ex post facto* law was brought in with great precipitation, for annulling this dividend. In the bill was inserted a clause, which suspended for about a year the right, which, under the public faith, the company enjoyed, of making their own dividends. Such was the disposition and temper of the house, that although the plain face of facts, reason, arithmetic, all the authority, parts, and eloquence in the kingdom, were against this bill; though all the chancellors of the exchequer, who had held that office from the beginning of this reign, opposed it; yet a few place-men of the subordinate departments sprung out of their ranks, took the lead, and, by an opinion *of some sort of secret support*, carried the bill with a high hand, leaving the then secretary of state and the chancellor of the exchequer in a very moderate minority. In this distracted situation, the managers of the bill, notwithstanding their triumph, did not venture to propose the payment of the civil list debt. The chancellor of the exchequer was not in good humour enough, after his late defeat by his own troops, to co-operate in such a design; so they made an act, to lock up the money in the exchequer until they should have time to look about them, and settle among themselves what they were to do with it.

Thus ended this unparalleled transaction. The author, I believe, will not claim any part of the glory of it: he will leave it whole and entire to the authors of the measure. The money was the voluntary free gift of the company; the rescinding bill was the act of legislature, to which they and we owe submission: the author has nothing to do with the one or with the other. However, he cannot avoid rubbing himself against this subject merely for the pleasure of stirring controversies, and gratifying a certain pruriency of taxation that seems to infect his blood. It is merely to indulge himself in speculations of taxing, that he chooses to harangue on this subject. For he takes credit for no greater sum than the public is already in possession of. He does not hint that the company means, or has ever shewn any disposition, if managed with common prudence, to pay less in future; and he cannot doubt that the present ministry are as well inclined to drive them by their mock inquiries, and real rescinding bills, as he can possibly be with his taxes. Besides, it is obvious, that as great a sum might have been

drawn from that company, without affecting property, or shaking the constitution, or endangering the principle of public credit, or running into his golden dreams of cockets on the Ganges, or visions of stamp duties on *Perwanna's*, *Dusticks*, *Kistbundees*, and *Husbulhookums*. For once, I will disappoint him in this part of the dispute; and only in a very few words recommend to his consideration, how he is to get off the dangerous idea of taxing a public fund, if he levies those duties in England; and if he is to levy them in India, what provision he has made for a revenue establishment there; supposing that he undertakes this new scheme of finance independently of the company, and against its inclinations.

So much for these revenues; which are nothing but his visions, or already the national possessions without any act of his. It is easy to parade with a high talk of parliamentary rights, of the universality of legislative powers, and of uniform taxation. Men of sense, when new projects come before them, always think a discourse proving the mere right or mere power of acting in the manner proposed, to be no more than a very unpleasant way of misspending time. They must see the object to be of proper magnitude to engage them; they must see the means of compassing it to be next to certain; the mischiefs not to counterbalance the profit; they will examine how a proposed imposition or regulation agrees with the opinion of those who are likely to be affected by it; they will not despise the consideration even of their habitudes and prejudices. They wish to know how it accords or disagrees with the true spirit of prior establishments, whether of government or of finance; because they well know, that in the complicated œconomy of great kingdoms, and immense revenues, which in a length of time, and by a variety of accidents, have coalesced into a sort of body, an attempt towards a compulsory equality in all circumstances, and an exact practical definition of the supreme rights in every case, is the most dangerous and chimerical of all enterprises. The old building stands well enough, though part Gothic, part Grecian, and part Chinese, until an attempt is made to square it into uniformity. Then it may come down upon our heads all together, in much uniformity of ruin; and great will be the fall thereof. Some people, instead of inclining to debate the matter, only feel a sort of nausea, when they are told, that "protection calls for supply," and that "all the parts ought to contribute to the support of the whole." Strange argument for great and grave deliberation! As if the same end may not, and must not, be compassed, according to its circumstances, by a great diversity of ways. Thus in Great Britain some of our establishments are apt for the support of credit. They stand therefore upon a principle of their own, distinct from, and in some respects contrary to, the relation between prince and subject. It is a new species of contract superinduced upon the old contract of the state. The idea of power must as much as possible be banished from it; for power and credit are things adverse, incompatible; *Non bene conveniunt, nec in una sede morantur*. Such establishments are our great *monied* companies. To tax them would be critical and dangerous, and contradictory to the very purpose of their institution; which is credit, and cannot therefore be taxation. But the nation, when it gave up that power, did not give up the advantage; but supposed, and with reason, that government was overpaid in credit, for what it seemed to lose in authority. In such a case to talk of the rights of sovereignty, is quite idle. Other establishments supply other modes of public contribution. Our *trading* companies, as well as individual importers, are a fit subject of revenue by customs. Some establishments pay us by a *monopoly* of their consumption and their produce. This, nominally no tax, in reality comprehends all taxes. Such establishments are our colonies. To tax them would be as erroneous in policy, as rigorous in equity. Ireland supplies us by furnishing troops in war; and by bearing part of our foreign establishment in peace. She aids us at all times by the money that her absentees spend among us; which is no small part of the rental of that kingdom. Thus Ireland contributes her part. Some objects bear port duties. Some are fitter for an inland excise. The mode varies, the object is the same. To strain these from their old and inveterate leanings, might impair the old benefit, and not answer the end of the new project. Among all the great men of antiquity, *Procrustes* shall never be my hero of legislation; with his iron bed, the allegory of his government, and the type of some modern policy, by which the long limb was to be cut short, and the short tortured into length. Such was the state-bed of uniformity! He would, I conceive, be a very indifferent farmer, who complained that his sheep did not plough, or his horses yield him wool, though it would be an idea full of equality. They may think this right in rustic œconomy, who think it available in the politic;

Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi!
Atque idem jungat vulpes, et mulgeat hircos.

As the author has stated this Indian taxation for no visible purpose relative to his plan of supply; so he has stated many other projects with as little, if any distinct end; unless perhaps to shew you how full he is of projects for the public good; and what vast expectations may be formed of him or his friends, if they should be translated into administration. It is also from some opinion that these speculations may one day become our public measures, that I think it worth while to trouble the reader at all about them.

Two of them stand out in high relievo beyond the rest. The first is a change in the internal representation of this country, by enlarging our number of constituents. The second is an addition to our representatives, by new American members of Parliament. I pass over here all considerations how far such a system will be an improvement of our constitution according to any sound theory. Not that I mean to condemn such speculative inquiries concerning this great object of the national attention. They may tend to clear doubtful points, and possibly may lead, as they have often done, to real improvements. What I object to, is their introduction into a discourse relating to the immediate state of our affairs, and recommending plans of practical government. In this view, I see nothing in them but what is usual with the author; an attempt to raise discontent in the people of England, to balance those discontents the measures of his friends had already raised in America. What other reason can he have for suggesting, that we are not happy enough to enjoy a sufficient number of voters in England? I believe that most sober thinkers on this subject are rather of opinion, that our fault is on the other side; and that it would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the pattern of our best laws, by lessening the number, to add to the weight and independency of our voters. And truly, considering the immense and dangerous charge of elections; the prostitute and daring venality, the corruption of manners, the idleness and profligacy of the lower sort of voters, no prudent man would propose to increase such an evil, if it be, as I fear it is, out of our power to administer to it any remedy. The author proposes nothing further. If he has any improvements that may balance or may lessen this inconvenience, he has thought proper to keep them as usual in his own breast. Since he has been so reserved, I should have wished he had been as cautious with regard to the project itself. First, because he observes justly, that his scheme, however it might improve the platform, can add nothing to the authority of the legislature; much, I fear, it will have a contrary operation: for, authority depending on opinion at least as much as on duty, an idea circulated among the people that our constitution is not so perfect as it ought to be, before you are sure of mending it, is a certain method of lessening it in the public opinion. Of this irreverent opinion of parliaments, the author himself complains in one part of his book; and he endeavours to increase it in another.

Has he well considered what an immense operation any change in our constitution is? how many discussions, parties, and passions, it will necessarily excite; and, when you open it to inquiry in one part, where the inquiry will stop? Experience shews us, that no time can be fit for such changes but a time of general confusion; when good men, finding every thing already broken up, think it right to take advantage of the opportunity of such derangement in favour of an useful alteration. Perhaps a time of the greatest security and tranquillity both at home and abroad may likewise be fit; but will the author affirm this to be just such a time? Transferring an idea of military to civil prudence, he ought to know how dangerous it is to make an alteration of your disposition in the face of an enemy.

Now comes his American representation. Here too, as usual, he takes no notice of any difficulty, nor says any thing to obviate those objections that must naturally arise in the minds of his readers. He throws you his politics as he does his revenue; do you make something of them if you can. Is not the reader a little astonished at the proposal of an American representation from that quarter? It is proposed merely as a project* of speculative improvement; not from the necessity in the case, not to add any thing to the authority of parliament, but that we may afford a greater attention to the concerns of the Americans, and give them a better opportunity of stating their grievances, and of obtaining redress. I am glad to find the author has at length discovered that we have not given a sufficient attention to their concerns, or a proper redress to their grievances. His great friend would once have been exceedingly displeased with any person, who should tell him, that he did not attend sufficiently to those concerns. He thought he did so, when he regulated the colonies over and over again: he thought he did so, when he formed two general systems of

* P. 39, 40.

revenue; one of port-duties, and the other of internal taxation. These systems supposed, or ought to suppose, the greatest attention to, and the most detailed information of, all their affairs. However, by contending for the American representation, he seems at last driven virtually to admit, that great caution ought to be used in the exercise of *all* our legislative rights over an object so remote from our eye, and so little connected with our immediate feelings; that in prudence we ought not to be quite so ready with our taxes, until we can secure the desired representation in Parliament. Perhaps it may be some time before this hopeful scheme can be brought to perfect maturity, although the author seems to be no wise aware of any obstructions that lie in the way of it. He talks of his union, just as he does of his taxes and his savings, with as much *sang froid* and ease, as if his wish and the enjoyment were exactly the same thing. He appears not to have troubled his head with the infinite difficulty of settling that representation on a fair balance of wealth and numbers throughout the several provinces of America and the West Indies, under such an infinite variety of circumstances. It costs him nothing to fight with nature, and to conquer the order of Providence, which manifestly opposes itself to the possibility of such a parliamentary union.

But let us, to indulge his passion for projects and power, suppose the happy time arrived, when the author comes into the ministry, and is to realize his speculations. The writs are issued for electing members for America and the West Indies. Some provinces receive them in six weeks, some in ten, some in twenty. A vessel may be lost, and then some provinces may not receive them at all. But let it be, that they all receive them at once, and in the shortest time. A proper space must be given for proclamation and for the election; some weeks at least. But the members are chosen; and, if ships are ready to sail, in about six more they arrive in London. In the mean time the parliament has sat, and business far advanced, without American representatives. Nay by this time, it may happen, that the parliament is dissolved; and then the members ship themselves again, to be again elected. The writs may arrive in America, before the poor members of a parliament in which they never sat, can arrive at their several provinces. A new interest is formed, and they find other members are chosen whilst they are on the high seas. But, if the writs and members arrive together, here is at best a new trial of skill among the candidates, after one set of them have well aired themselves with their two voyages of 6,000 miles.

However, in order to facilitate every thing to the author, we will suppose them all once more elected, and steering again to old England, with a good heart, and a fair westerly wind in their stern. On their arrival, they find all in a hurry and bustle; in and out; condolence and congratulation; the crown is demised. Another parliament is to be called. Away back to America again on a fourth voyage, and to a third election. Does the author mean to make our kings as immortal in their personal as in their politic character? or, whilst he bountifully adds to their life, will he take from them their prerogative of dissolving parliaments, in favour of the American union? or are the American representatives to be perpetual, and to feel neither demises of the crown, nor dissolutions of parliament?

But these things may be granted to him, without bringing him much nearer to his point. What does he think of re-election? is the American member the only one who is not to take a place, or the only one to be exempted from the ceremony of re-election? How will this great politician preserve the rights of electors, the fairness of returns, and the privilege of the house of commons, as the sole judge of such contests? It would undoubtedly be a glorious sight to have eight or ten petitions, or double returns, from Boston and Barbadoes, from Philadelphia and Jamaica, the members returned, and the petitioners, with all their train of attorneys, solicitors, mayors, select men, provost-marshals, and above five hundred or a thousand witnesses, come to the bar of the house of commons. Possibly we might be interrupted in the enjoyment of this pleasing spectacle, if a war should break out, and our constitutional fleet, loaded with members of parliament, returning officers, petitions, and witnesses, the electors and elected, should become a prize to the French or Spaniards, and be conveyed to Carthagena or to La Vera Cruz, and from thence perhaps to Mexico or Lima, there to remain until a cartel for members of parliament can be settled, or until the war is ended.

In truth, the author has little studied this business; or he might have known, that some of the most considerable provinces of America, such for instance as Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay, have not in each of them two men who can afford, at a distance from their estates, to spend a thousand pounds a year. How can these provinces be represented at Westminster? If their province pays them,

they are American agents, with salaries, and not independent members of parliament. It is true, that formerly in England members had salaries from their constituents; but they all had salaries, and were all, in this way, upon a par. If these American representatives have no salaries, then they must add to the list of our pensioners and dependants at court, or they must starve. There is no alternative.

Enough of this visionary union; in which much extravagance appears without any fancy, and the judgment is shocked without any thing to refresh the imagination. It looks as if the author had dropped down from the moon, without any knowledge of the general nature of this globe, of the general nature of its inhabitants, without the least acquaintance with the affairs of this country. Governor Pownal has handled the same subject. To do him justice, he treats it upon far more rational principles of speculation; and much more like a man of business. He thinks (erroneously, I conceive; but he does think) that our legislative rights are incomplete without such a representation. It is no wonder, therefore, that he endeavours by every means to obtain it. Not like our author, who is always on velvet, he is aware of some difficulties; and he proposes some solutions. But nature is too hard for both these authors; and America is, and ever will be, without actual representation in the house of commons; nor will any minister be wild enough even to propose such a representation in parliament; however he may choose to throw out that project, together with others equally far from his real opinions and remote from his designs, merely to fall in with the different views, and captivate the affections, of different sorts of men.

Whether these projects arise from the author's real political principles, or are only brought out in subservience to his political views, they compose the whole of any thing that is alike precise and definite, which the author has given us to expect from that administration which is so much the subject of his praises and prayers. As to his general propositions, that "there is a deal of difference between impossibilities and great difficulties;" that "a great scheme cannot be carried, unless made the business of successive administrations;" that "virtuous and able men are the fittest to serve their country;" all this I look on as no more than so much rubble to fill up the spaces between the regular masonry. Pretty much in the same light I cannot forbear considering his detached observations on commerce; such as, that "the system for colony regulations would be very simple, and mutually beneficial to Great Britain and her colonies, if the old navigation laws were adhered to."* That "the transportation should be in all cases in ships belonging to British subjects." That "even British ships should not be *generally* received into the colonies from any part of Europe, except the dominions of Great Britain." That "it is unreasonable that corn and such like products should be restrained to come first to a British port." What do all these fine observations signify? Some of them condemn, as ill practices, things that were never practised at all. Some recommend to be done, things that always have been done. Others indeed convey, though obliquely and loosely, some insinuations highly dangerous to our commerce. If I could prevail on myself to think the author meant to ground any practice upon these general propositions, I should think it very necessary to ask a few questions about some of them. For instance, what does he mean by talking of an adherence to the old navigation laws? does he mean, that the particular law, 12 Car. II. c. 19, commonly called, "The Act of Navigation," is to be adhered to, and that the several subsequent additions, amendments, and exceptions, ought to be all repealed? If so, he will make a strange havoc in the whole system of our trade laws, which have been universally acknowledged to be full as well founded in the alterations and exceptions, as the act of Charles the Second in the original provisions; and to pursue full as wisely the great end of that very politic law, the increase of the British navigation. I fancy the writer could hardly propose any thing more alarming to those immediately interested in that navigation than such a repeal. If he does not mean this, he has got no farther than a nugatory proposition, which nobody can contradict, and for which no man is the wiser.

That "the regulations for the colony trade would be few and simple if the old navigation laws were adhered to," I utterly deny as a fact. That they ought to be so, sounds well enough; but this proposition is of the same nugatory nature with some of the former. The regulations for the colony trade ought not to be more nor fewer, nor more nor less complex, than the occasion requires. And, as that trade is in a great measure a system of art and restriction, they can neither be few nor simple. It is true, that the very principle may be destroyed, by multiplying to excess the means of securing it. Never did a minister depart more

* P. 39

from the author's ideas of simplicity, or more embarrass the trade of America with the multiplicity and intricacy of regulations and ordinances, than his boasted minister of 1764. That minister seemed to be possessed with something, hardly short of a rage, for regulation and restriction. He had so multiplied bonds, certificates, affidavits, warrants, sufferances, and cockets; had supported them with such severe penalties, and extended them without the least consideration of circumstances to so many objects, that, had they all continued in their original force, commerce must speedily have expired under them. Some of them, the ministry which gave them birth was obliged to destroy: with their own hand they signed the condemnation of their own regulations; confessing, in so many words, in the preamble of their act of the 5th Geo. III. that some of these regulations had laid *an unnecessary restraint on the trade and correspondence of his Majesty's American subjects.* This, in that ministry, was a candid confession of a mistake: but every alteration made in those regulations by their successours is to be the effect of envy, and American misrepresentation. So much for the author's simplicity in regulation.

I have now gone through all which I think immediately essential in the author's idea of war, of peace, of the comparative states of England and France, of our actual situation; in his projects of œconomy, of finance, of commerce, and of constitutional improvement. There remains nothing now to be considered, except his heavy censures upon the administration which was formed in 1765; which is commonly known by the name of the Marquis of Rockingham's administration, as the administration which preceded it is by that of Mr. Grenville. These censures relate chiefly to three heads: 1. To the repeal of the American stamp act. 2. To the commercial regulations then made. 3. To the course of foreign negotiations during that short period.

A person who knew nothing of public affairs but from the writings of this author would be led to conclude, that, at the time of the change in June 1765, some well-digested system of administration, founded in national strength, and in the affections of the people, proceeding in all points with the most reverential and tender regard to the laws, and pursuing with equal wisdom and success every thing which could tend to the internal prosperity, and to the external honour and dignity of this country, had been all at once subverted, by an irruption of a sort of wild, licentious, unprincipled invaders, who wantonly, and with a barbarous rage, had defaced a thousand fair monuments of the constitutional and political skill of their predecessors. It is natural indeed that this author should have some dislike to the administration which was formed in 1765. Its views in most things were different from those of his friends; in some, altogether opposite to them. It is impossible that both of these administrations should be the objects of public esteem. Their different principles compose some of the strongest political lines which discriminate the parties even now subsisting among us. The ministers of 1764 are not indeed followed by very many in their opposition: yet a large part of the people now in office entertain, or pretend to entertain, sentiments entirely conformable to theirs; whilst some of the former colleagues of the ministry which was formed in 1765, however they may have abandoned the connection, and contradicted by their conduct the principles of their former friends, pretend, on their parts, still to adhere to the same maxims. All the lesser divisions, which are indeed rather names of personal attachment than of party distinction, fall in with the one or the other of these leading parties.

I intend to state, as shortly as I am able, the general condition of public affairs, and the disposition of the minds of men, at the time of the remarkable change of system in 1765. The reader will have thereby a more distinct view of the comparative merits of these several plans, and will receive more satisfaction concerning the ground and reason of the measures which were then pursued, than, I believe, can be derived from the perusal of those partial representations contained in the State of the Nation, and the other writings of those who have continued, for now near three years, in the undisturbed possession of the press. This will, I hope, be some apology for my dwelling a little on this part of the subject.

On the resignation of the Earl of Bute, in 1763, our affairs had been delivered into the hands of three ministers of his recommendation; Mr. Grenville, the Earl of Egremont, and the Earl of Halifax. This arrangement, notwithstanding the retirement of Lord Bute, announced to the public a continuance of the same measures; nor was there more reason to expect a change from the death of the Earl of Egremont. The Earl of Sandwich supplied his place. The Duke of Bedford, and the gentlemen who act in that connection, and whose general character and politics were sufficiently understood, added to the strength of the ministry, without making any alteration in their plan of conduct. Such was

the constitution of the ministry which was changed in 1765.

As to their politics, the principles of the peace of Paris governed in foreign affairs. In domestic, the same scheme prevailed, of contradicting the opinions, and disgracing most of the persons, who had been countenanced and employed in the late reign. The inclinations of the people were little attended to; and a disposition to the use of forcible methods ran through the whole tenour of administration. The nation in general was uneasy and dissatisfied. Sober men saw causes for it, in the constitution of the ministry and the conduct of the ministers. The ministers, who have usually a short method on such occasions, attributed their unpopularity wholly to the efforts of faction. However this might be, the licentiousness and tumults of the common people, and the contempt of government, of which our author so often and so bitterly complains, as owing to the mismanagement of the subsequent administrations, had at no time risen to a greater or more dangerous height. The measures taken to suppress that spirit were as violent and licentious as the spirit itself; injudicious, precipitate, and some of them illegal. Instead of allaying, they tended infinitely to inflame the distemper; and whoever will be at the least pains to examine, will find those measures, not only the causes of the tumults which then prevailed, but the real sources of almost all the disorders which have arisen since that time. More intent on making a victim to party than an example of justice, they blundered in the method of pursuing their vengeance. By this means a discovery was made of many practices, common indeed in the office of secretary of state, but wholly repugnant to our laws, and the genius of the English constitution. One of the worst of these was, the wanton and indiscriminate seizure of papers, even in cases where the safety of the state was nor pretended in justification of so harsh a proceeding. The temper of the ministry had excited a jealousy, which made the people more than commonly vigilant concerning every power which was exercised by government. The abuse, however sanctioned by custom, was evident; but the ministry, instead of resting in a prudent inactivity, or (what would have been still more prudent) taking the lead, in quieting the minds of the people, and ascertaining the law upon those delicate points, made use of the whole influence of government to prevent a parliamentary resolution against these practices of office. And lest the colourable reasons, offered in argument against this parliamentary procedure, should be mistaken for the real motives of their conduct, all the advantage of privilege, all the arts and finenesses of pleading, and great sums of public money were lavished, to prevent any decision upon those practices in the courts of justice. In the mean time, in order to weaken, since they could not immediately destroy, the liberty of the press, the privilege of parliament was voted away in all accusations for a seditious libel. The freedom of debate in parliament itself was no less menaced. Officers of the army, of long and meritorious service, and of small fortunes, were chosen as victims for a single vote, by an exertion of ministerial power, which had been very rarely used, and which is extremely unjust, as depriving men not only of a place, but a profession, and is indeed of the most pernicious example both in a civil and a military light.

Whilst all things were managed at home with such a spirit of disorderly despotism; abroad there was a proportionable abatement of all spirit. Some of our most just and valuable claims were in a manner abandoned. This indeed seemed not very inconsistent conduct in the ministers who had made the treaty of Paris. With regard to our domestic affairs, there was no want of industry; but there was a great deficiency of temper and judgment, and manly comprehension of the public interest. The nation certainly wanted relief, and government attempted to administer it. Two ways were principally chosen for this great purpose. The first by regulation; the second by new funds of revenue. Agreeably to this plan, a new naval establishment was formed at a good deal of expense, and to little effect, to aid in the collection of the customs. Regulation was added to regulation; and the strictest and most unreserved orders were given, for a prevention of all contraband trade here, and in every part of America. A teasing custom-house, and a multiplicity of perplexing regulations, ever have, and ever will appear, the master-piece of finance to people of narrow views; as a paper against smuggling, and the importation of French finery, never fails of furnishing a very popular column in a newspaper.

The greatest part of these regulations were made for America; and they fell so indiscriminately on all sorts of contraband, or supposed contraband, that some of the most valuable branches of trade were driven violently from our ports; which caused an universal consternation throughout the colonies. Every part of the trade was infinitely distressed by them. Men of war now for the first time, armed with regular commissions of custom-house officers,

invested the coasts, and gave to the collection of revenue the air of hostile contribution. About the same time that these regulations seemed to threaten the destruction of the only trade from whence the plantations derived any specie, an act was made, putting a stop to the future emission of paper currency, which used to supply its place among them. Hand in hand with this went another act, for obliging the colonies to provide quarters for soldiers. Instantly followed another law, for levying throughout all America new port duties, upon a vast variety of commodities of their consumption, and some of which lay heavy upon objects necessary for their trade and fishery. Immediately upon the heels of these, and amidst the uneasiness and confusion produced by a crowd of new impositions and regulations, some good, some evil, some doubtful, all crude and ill-considered, came another act, for imposing an universal stamp duty on the colonies; and this was declared to be little more than an experiment, and a foundation of future revenue. To render these proceedings the more irritating to the colonies, the principal argument used in favour of their ability to pay such duties was the liberality of the grants of their assemblies during the late war. Never could any argument be more insulting and mortifying to a people habituated to the granting of their own money.

Taxes for the purpose of raising revenue had hitherto been sparingly attempted in America. Without ever doubting the extent of its lawful power, parliament always doubted the propriety of such impositions. And the Americans on their part never thought of contesting a right by which they were so little affected. Their assemblies in the main answered all the purposes necessary to the internal œconomy of a free people, and provided for all the exigencies of government which arose among themselves. In the midst of that happy enjoyment, they never thought of critically settling the exact limits of a power, which was necessary to their union, their safety, their equality, and even their liberty. Thus the two very difficult points, superiority in the presiding state, and freedom in the subordinate, were on the whole sufficiently, that is, practically, reconciled; without agitating those vexatious questions, which in truth rather belong to metaphysics than politics, and which can never be moved without shaking the foundations of the best governments that have ever been constituted by human wisdom. By this measure was let loose that dangerous spirit of disquisition, not in the coolness of philosophical inquiry, but inflamed with all the passions of an haughty resentful people, who thought themselves deeply injured, and that they were contending for every thing that was valuable in the world.

In England, our ministers went on without the least attention to these alarming dispositions; just as if they were doing the most common things in the most usual way, and among a people not only passive but pleased. They took no one step to divert the dangerous spirit which began even then to appear in the colonies, to compromise with it, to mollify it, or to subdue it. No new arrangements were made in civil government; no new powers or instructions were given to governours; no augmentation was made, or new disposition, of forces. Never was so critical a measure pursued with so little provision against its necessary consequences. As if all common prudence had abandoned the ministers, and as if they meant to plunge themselves and us headlong into that gulph which stood gaping before them; by giving a year's notice of the project of their stamp-act, they allowed time for all the discontents of that country to fester and come to a head, and for all the arrangements which factious men could make towards an opposition to the law. At the same time they carefully concealed from the eye of parliament those remonstrances which they had actually received; and which in the strongest manner indicated the discontent of some of the colonies, and the consequences which might be expected; they concealed them, even in defiance of an order of council, that they should be laid before parliament. Thus, by concealing the true state of the case, they rendered the wisdom of the nation as improvident as their own temerity, either in preventing or guarding against the mischief. It has indeed, from the beginning to this hour, been the uniform policy of this set of men, in order, at any hazard to obtain a present credit, to propose whatever might be pleasing, as attended with no difficulty; and afterwards to throw all the disappointment of the wild expectations they had raised, upon those who have the hard task of freeing the public from the consequences of their pernicious projects.

Whilst the commerce and tranquillity of the whole empire were shaken in this manner, our affairs grew still more distracted by the internal dissensions of our ministers. Treachery and ingratitude was charged from one side; despotism and tyranny from the other; the vertigo of the regency bill; the awkward reception of the silk bill in the house of commons, and the inconsiderate and abrupt rejection of it in the house of lords; the strange and violent tumults

which arose in consequence, and which were rendered more serious, by being charged by the ministers upon one another; the report of a gross and brutal treatment of the ———, by a minister at the same time odious to the people; all conspired to leave the public, at the close of the session of 1765, in as critical and perilous a situation, as ever the nation was, or could be, in a time when she was not immediately threatened by her neighbours.

It was at this time, and in these circumstances, that a new administration was formed. Professing even industriously, in this public matter, to avoid anecdotes; I say nothing of those famous reconciliations and quarrels, which weakened the body that should have been the natural support of this administration. I run no risk in affirming, that, surrounded as they were with difficulties of every species, nothing but the strongest and most uncorrupt sense of their duty to the public could have prevailed upon some of the persons who composed it to undertake the king's business at such a time. Their preceding character, their measures while in power, and the subsequent conduct of many of them, I think, leave no room to charge this assertion to flattery. Having undertaken the commonwealth, what remained for them to do? to piece their conduct upon the broken chain of former measures? If they had been so inclined, the ruinous nature of those measures, which began instantly to appear, would not have permitted it. Scarcely had they entered into office, when letters arrived from all parts of America, making loud complaints, backed by strong reasons, against several of the principal regulations of the late ministry, as threatening destruction to many valuable branches of commerce. These were attended with representations from many merchants and capital manufacturers at home, who had all their interests involved in the support of lawful trade, and in the suppression of every sort of contraband. Whilst these things were under consideration, that conflagration blazed out at once in North America; an universal disobedience, and open resistance to the stamp act; and, in in consequence, an universal stop to the course of justice, and to trade and navigation, throughout that great important country; an interval during which the trading interest of England lay under the most dreadful anxiety which it ever felt.

The repeal of that act was proposed. It was much too serious a measure, and attended with too many difficulties upon every side, for the then ministry to have undertaken it, as some paltry writers have asserted, from envy and dislike to their predecessors in office. As little could it be owing to personal cowardice, and dread of consequences to themselves. Ministers, timorous from their attachment to place and power, will fear more from the consequences of one court intrigue, than from a thousand difficulties to the commerce and credit of their country by disturbances at three thousand miles distance. From which of these the ministers had most to apprehend at that time, is known, I presume, universally. Nor did they take that resolution from a want of the fullest sense of the inconveniences which must necessarily attend a measure of concession from the sovereign to the subject. That it must increase the insolence of the mutinous spirits in America, was but too obvious. No great measure indeed, at a very difficult crisis, can be pursued, which is not attended with some mischief; none but conceited pretenders in public business will hold any other language: and none but weak and unexperienced men will believe them, if they should. If we were found in such a crisis, let those whose bold designs, and whose defective arrangements, brought us into it, answer for the consequences. The business of the then ministry evidently was, to take such steps, not as the wishes of our author, or as their own wishes dictated, but as the bad situation which their predecessors had left them, absolutely required.

The disobedience to this act was universal throughout America; nothing, it was evident, but the sending a very strong military, backed by a very strong naval force, would reduce the seditious to obedience. To send it to one town, would not be sufficient; every province of America must be traversed, and must be subdued. I do not entertain the least doubt but this could be done. We might, I think, without much difficulty have destroyed our colonies. This destruction might be effected, probably in a year, or in two at the utmost. If the question was upon a foreign nation, where every successful stroke adds to your own power, and takes from that of a rival, a just war with such a certain superiority would be undoubtedly an advisable measure. But *four million* of debt due to our merchants, the total cessation of a trade annually worth *four million* more, a large foreign traffic, much home manufacture, a very capital immediate revenue arising from colony imports, indeed the produce of every one of our revenues greatly depending on this trade, all these were very weighty accumulated considerations, at least well to be weighed, before that sword was drawn, which even by its victories must produce all the evil effects of

the greatest national defeat. How public credit must have suffered, I need not say. If the condition of the nation, at the close of our foreign war, was what this author represents it, such a civil war would have been a bad couch on which to repose our wearied virtue. Far from being able to have entered into new plans of œconomy, we must have launched into a new sea, I fear a boundless sea, of expense. Such an addition of debt, with such a diminution of revenue and trade, would have left us in no want of a *State of the Nation* to aggravate the picture of our distresses.

Our trade felt this to its vitals; and our then ministers were not ashamed to say, that they sympathized with the feelings of our merchants. The universal alarm of the whole trading body of England will never be laughed at by them as an ill-grounded or a pretended panic. The universal desire of that body will always have great weight with them in every consideration connected with commerce; neither ought the opinion of that body to be slighted (notwithstanding the contemptuous and indecent language of this author and his associates) in any consideration whatsoever of revenue. Nothing among us is more quickly or deeply affected by taxes of any kind than trade; and if an American tax was a real relief to England, no part of the community would be sooner, or more materially relieved by it than our merchants. But they well know that the trade of England must be more burthened by one penny raised in America, than by three in England; and if that penny be raised with the uneasiness, the discontent, and the confusion of America, more than by ten.

If the opinion and wish of the landed interest is a motive, and it is a fair and just one, for taking away a real and large revenue, the desire of the trading interest of England ought to be a just ground for taking away a tax, of little better than speculation, which was to be collected by a war, which was to be kept up with the perpetual discontent of those who were to be affected by it, and the value of whose produce, even after the *ordinary* charges of collection, was very uncertain;* after the *extraordinary*, the dearest purchased revenue that ever was made by any nation.

* It is observable, that the partisans of American taxation, when they have a mind to represent this tax as wonderfully beneficial to England, state it as worth £.100,000 a year; when they are to represent it as very light on the Americans, it dwindles to £.60,000. Indeed it is very difficult to compute what its produce might have been.

These were some of the motives drawn from principles of convenience for that repeal. When the object came to be more narrowly inspected, every motive concurred. These colonies were evidently founded in subservience to the commerce of Great Britain. From this principle, the whole system of our laws concerning them became a system of restriction. A double monopoly was established on the part of the parent country; 1. A monopoly of their whole import, which is to be altogether from Great Britain; 2. A monopoly of all their export, which is to be no where but to Great Britain, as far as it can serve any purpose here. On the same idea it was contrived that they should send all their products to us raw, and in their first state; and that they should take every thing from us in the last stage of manufacture.

Were ever a people under such circumstances, that is, a people who were to export raw, and to receive manufactured, and this, not a few luxurious articles, but all articles, even to those of the grossest, most vulgar, and necessary consumption, a people who were in the hands of a general monopolist, were ever such a people suspected of a possibility of becoming a just object of revenue? All the ends of their foundation must be supposed utterly contradicted before they could become such an object. Every trade-law we have made must have been eluded, and become useless, before they could be in such a condition.

The partisans of the new system, who, on most occasions, take credit for full as much knowledge as they possess, think proper on this occasion to counterfeit an extraordinary degree of ignorance, and in consequence of it to assert, "that the balance (between the colonies and Great Britain) is unknown, and that no important conclusion can be drawn from premises so very uncertain."† Now to what can this ignorance be owing? were the navigation laws made, that this balance should be unknown? is it from the course of exchange that it is unknown, which all the world knows to be greatly and perpetually against the colonies? is it from the doubtful nature of the trade we carry on with the colonies? are not these schemists well apprised, that the colonists, particularly those of the northern provinces, import more from Great Britain, ten times more, than they send in return to us? that a great part of their foreign balance is, and must be remitted to London? I shall be ready to admit that the colonies ought to be taxed to

† Considerations, p. 74.

the revenues of this country, when I know that they are out of debt to its commerce. This author will furnish some ground to his theories, and communicate a discovery to the public, if he can shew this by any medium. But he tells us, that "their seas are covered with ships, and their rivers floating with commerce."* This is true. But it is with *our* ships that the seas are covered; and their rivers float with British commerce. The American merchants are our factors; all in reality, most even in name. The Americans trade, navigate, cultivate, with English capitals; to their own advantage, to be sure; for without these capitals their ploughs would be stopped, and their ships wind-bound. But he who furnishes the capital must, on the whole, be the person principally benefited; the person who works upon it profits on his part too; but he profits in a subordinate way, as our colonies do; that is, as the servant of a wise and indulgent master, and no otherwise. We have all, except the *peculium*; without which, even slaves will not labour.

If the author's principles, which are the common notions, be right, that the price of our manufactures is so greatly enhanced by our taxes; then the Americans already pay in that way a share of our impositions. He is not ashamed to assert, that "France and China may be said, on the same principle, to bear a part of our charges, for they consume our commodities."† Was ever such a method of reasoning heard of? Do not the laws absolutely confine the colonies to buy from us, whether foreign nations sell cheaper or not? On what other idea are all our prohibitions, regulations, guards, penalties, and forfeitures, framed? To secure to us, not a commercial preference, which stands in need of no penalties to enforce it; it finds its own way; but to secure to us a trade, which is a creature of law and institution. What has this to do with the principles of a foreign trade, which is under no monopoly, and in which we cannot raise the price of our goods, without hazarding the demand for them? None but the authors of such measures could ever think of making use of such arguments.

Whoever goes about to reason on any part of the policy of this country with regard to America, upon the mere abstract principles of government, or even upon those of our own ancient constitution, will be often misled. Those who resort for arguments to the most respectable authorities, ancient or modern, or rest upon the clearest maxims, drawn from the experience of other states and empires, will be liable to the greatest errours imaginable. The object is wholly new in the world. It is singular: it is grown up to this magnitude and importance within the memory of man; nothing in history is parallel to it. All the reasonings about it, that are likely to be at all solid, must be drawn from its actual circumstances. In this new system a principle of commerce, of artificial commerce, must predominate. This commerce must be secured by a multitude of restraints very alien from the spirit of liberty; and a powerful authority must reside in the principal state, in order to enforce them. But the people who are to be the subjects of these restraints are descendants of Englishmen; and of an high and free spirit. To hold over them a government made up of nothing but restraints and penalties, and taxes in the granting of which they can have no share, will neither be wise nor long practicable. People must be governed in a manner agreeable to their temper and disposition; and men of free character and spirit must be ruled with, at least, some condescension to this spirit and this character. The British colonist must see something which will distinguish him from the colonists of other nations.

Those reasonings, which infer from the many restraints under which we have already laid America, to our right to lay it under still more, and indeed under all manner of restraints, are conclusive; conclusive as to right; but the very reverse as to policy and practice. We ought rather to infer from our having laid the colonies under many restraints, that it is reasonable to compensate them by every indulgence that can by any means be reconciled to our interest. We have a great empire to rule, composed of a vast mass of heterogeneous governments, all more or less free and popular in their forms, all to be kept in peace, and kept out of conspiracy, with one another, all to be held in subordination to this country; while the spirit of an extensive and intricate and trading interest pervades the whole, always qualifying, and often controlling, every general idea of constitution and government. It is a great and difficult object; and I wish we may possess wisdom and temper enough to manage it as we ought. Its importance is infinite. I believe the reader will be struck, as I have been, with one singular fact. In the year 1704, but sixty-five years ago, the whole trade with our plantations was but a few thousand pounds more in the export article, and a third less in the import,

* Considerations, p. 79.
† Considerations, p. 74.

than that which we now carry on with the single island of Jamaica:

	Exports.	Imports.
Total English plantations in 1704, -	£.483,265 -	£.814,491
Jamaica, 1767,	467,681 -	1,243,742

From the same information I find that our dealing with most of the European nations is but little increased; these nations have been pretty much at a stand since that time; and we have rivals in their trade. This colony intercourse is a new world of commerce in a manner created; it stands upon principles of its own; principles hardly worth endangering for any little consideration of extorted revenue.

The reader sees, that I do not enter so fully into this matter as obviously I might. I have already been led into greater lengths than I intended. It is enough to say, that before the ministers of 1765 had determined to propose the repeal of the stamp act in parliament, they had the whole of the American constitution and commerce very fully before them. They considered maturely; they decided with wisdom: let me add, with firmness. For they resolved, as a preliminary to that repeal, to assert in the fullest and least equivocal terms the unlimited legislative right of this country over its colonies; and, having done this, to propose the repeal, on principles, not of constitutional right, but on those of expediency, of equity, of lenity, and of the true interests present and future of that great object for which alone the colonies were founded, navigation and commerce. This plan, I say, required an uncommon degree of firmness, when we consider that some of those persons who might be of the greatest use in promoting the repeal, violently withstood the declaratory act; and they who agreed with administration in the principles of that law, equally made, as well the reasons on which the declaratory act itself stood, as those on which it was opposed, grounds for an opposition to the repeal.

If the then ministry resolved first to declare the right, it was not from any opinion they entertained of its future use in regular taxation. Their opinions were full and declared against the ordinary use of such a power. But it was plain, that the general reasonings which were employed against that power went directly to our whole legislative right; and one part of it could not be yielded to such arguments, without a virtual surrender of all the rest. Besides, if that very specific power of levying money in the colonies were not retained as a sacred trust in the hands of Great Britain (to be used, not in the first instance for supply, but in the last exigence for controul,) it is obvious, that the presiding authority of Great Britain, as the head, the arbiter, and director of the whole empire, would vanish into an empty name, without operation or energy. With the habitual exercise of such a power in the ordinary course of supply, no trace of freedom could remain to America.* If Great Britain were stripped of this right, every principle of unity and subordination in the empire was gone for ever. Whether all this can be reconciled in legal speculation, is a matter of no consequence. It is reconciled in policy; and politics ought to be adjusted, not to human reasonings, but to human nature; of which the reason is but a part, and by no means the greatest part.

Founding the repeal on this basis, it was judged proper to lay before parliament the whole detail of the American affairs, as fully as it had been laid before the ministry themselves. Ignorance of those affairs had misled parliament. Knowledge alone could bring it into the right road. Every paper of office was laid upon the table of the two houses; every denomination of men, either of America, or connected with it by office, by residence, by commerce, by interest, even by injury; men of civil and military capacity, officers of the revenue, merchants, manufacturers of every species, and from every town in England, attended at the bar. Such evidence never was laid before parliament. If an emulation arose among the ministers and members of parliament, as the author rightly observes,† for the repeal of this act, as well as for the other regulations, it was not on the confident assertions, the airy speculations, or the vain promises of ministers, that it arose. It was the sense of parliament on the evidence before them. No one so much as suspects that ministerial allurements or terrours had any share in it.

Our author is very much displeased, that so much credit was given to the testimony of merchants. He has an habit of railing at them; and he may, if he pleases, indulge himself in

* I do not here enter into the unsatisfactory disquisition concerning representation real or presumed. I only say, that a great people, who have their property, without any reserve, in all cases, disposed of by another people at an immense distance from them, will not think themselves in the enjoyment of freedom. It will be hard to shew to those who are in such a state, which of the usual parts of the definition or description of a free people are applicable to them; and it is neither pleasant nor wise to attempt to prove that they have no right to be comprehended in such a description.

† P. 21.

it. It will not do great mischief to that respectable set of men. The substance of their testimony was, that their debts in America were very great: that the Americans declined to pay them, or to renew their orders, whilst this act continued: that, under those circumstances, they despaired of the recovery of their debts, or the renewal of their trade in that country: that they apprehended a general failure of mercantile credit. The manufacturers deposed to the same general purpose, with this addition, that many of them had discharged several of their artificers; and, if the law and the resistance to it should continue, must dismiss them all.

This testimony is treated with great contempt by our author. It must be, I suppose, because it was contradicted by the plain nature of things. Suppose then that the merchants had, to gratify this author, given a contrary evidence; and had deposed, that while America remained in a state of resistance, whilst four millions of debt remained unpaid, whilst the course of justice was suspended for want of stamped paper, so that no debt could be recovered, whilst there was a total stop to trade, because every ship was subject to seizure for want of stamped clearances, and while the colonies were to be declared in rebellion, and subdued by armed force, that in these circumstances they would still continue to trade cheerfully and fearlessly as before; would not such witnesses provoke universal indignation for their folly or their wickedness, and be deservedly hooted from the bar;* would any human faith have given credit to such assertions? The testimony of the merchants was necessary for the detail, and to bring the matter home to the feeling of the house; as to the general reasons, they spoke abundantly for themselves.

Upon these principles was the act repealed,

* Here the author has a note altogetner in his usual strain of reasoning; he finds out that somebody, in the course of this multifarious evidence, had said, "that a very considerable part of the orders of 1765 transmitted from America had been afterwards suspended; but that in case the stamp act was repealed, those orders were to be executed in the present year 1766;" and that, on the repeal of the stamp act, "the exports to the colonies would be at least double the value of the exports of the past year." He then triumphs exceedingly on their having fallen short of it on the state of the custom-house entries. I do not well know what conclusion he draws applicable to his purpose, from these facts. He does not deny that all the orders which came from America subsequent to the disturbances of the stamp act were on the condition of that act being repealed; and, he does not assert that, notwithstanding that act should be enforced by a strong hand, still the orders would be executed. Neither does he quite venture to say that this decline of the trade in 1766 was owing to the repeal. What does he therefore infer from it, favourable to the enforcement of that law? It only comes to this, and no more; those merchants, who thought our trade would be doubled in the subsequent year, were mistaken in their speculations. So that the stamp act was not to be repealed unless this speculation of theirs was a probable event. But it was not repealed in order to double our trade in that year, as every body knows, (whatever some merchants might have said,) but lest in that year we should have no trade at all. The fact is, that, during the greatest part of the year 1765, that is, until about the month of October, when the accounts of the disturbances came thick upon us, the American trade went on as usual. Before this time, the stamp act could not affect it. Afterwards, the merchants fell into a great consternation; a general stagnation in trade ensued. But as soon as it was known that the ministry favoured the repeal of the stamp act, several of the bolder merchants ventured to execute their orders; others more timid hung back: in this manner the trade continued in a state of dreadful fluctuation between the fears of those who had ventured, for the event of their boldness, and the anxiety of those whose trade was suspended, until the royal assent was finally given to the bill of repeal. That the trade of 1766 was not equal to that of 1765, could not be owing to the repeal; it arose from quite different causes, of which the author seems not to be aware: 1st, Our conquests during the war had laid open the trade of the French and Spanish West Indies to our colonies much more largely than they had ever enjoyed it; this continued for some time after the peace; but at length it was extremely contracted, and in some places reduced to nothing. Such in particular was the state of Jamaica. On the taking the Havannah all the stores of that island were emptied into that place, which produced unusual orders for goods, for supplying their own consumption, as well as for further speculations of trade. These ceasing, the trade stood on its own bottom. This is one cause of the diminished export to Jamaica; and not the childish idea of the author, of an impossible contraband from the opening of the ports. 2d, The war had brought a great influx of cash into America, for the pay and provision of the troops; and this an unnatural increase of trade, which, as its cause failed, must in some degree return to its ancient and natural bounds. 3d, When the merchants met from all parts, and compared their accounts, they were alarmed at the immensity of the debt due to them from America. They found that the Americans had over-traded their abilities. And, as they found too that several of them were capable of making the state of political events an excuse for their failure in commercial punctuality, many of our merchants in some degree contracted their trade from that moment. However, it is idle, in such an immense mass of trade, so liable to fluctuation, to infer any thing from such a deficiency as one or even two hundred thousand pounds In 1767, when the disturbances subsided, this deficiency was made up again.

and it produced all the good effect which was expected from it: quiet was restored; trade generally returned to its ancient channels; time and means were furnished for the better strengthening of government there, as well as for recovering, by judicious measures, the affections of the people, had that ministry continued, or had a ministry succeeded with dispositions to improve that opportunity.

Such an administration did not succeed. Instead of profiting of that season of tranquillity, in the very next year they chose to return to measures of the very same nature with those which had been so solemnly condemned; though upon a smaller scale. The effects have been correspondent. America is again in disorder; not indeed in the same degree as formerly, nor any thing like it. Such good effects have attended the repeal of the stamp-act, that the colonies have actually paid the taxes; and they have sought their redress (upon however improper principles) not in their own violence, as formerly;* but in the experienced benignity of parliament. They are not easy indeed, nor ever will be so, under this author's schemes of taxation; but we see no longer the same general fury and confusion, which attended their resistance to the stamp-act. The author may rail at the repeal, and those who proposed it, as he pleases. Those honest men suffer all his obloquy with pleasure, in the midst of the quiet which they have been the means of giving to their country; and would think his praises for their perseverance in a pernicious scheme, a very bad compensation for the disturbance of our peace, and the ruin of our commerce. Whether the return to the system of 1764, for raising a revenue in America, the discontents which have ensued in consequence of it, the general suspension of the assemblies in consequence of these discontents, the use of the military power, and the new and dangerous commissions which now hang over them, will produce equally good effects, is greatly to be doubted. Never, I fear, will this nation and the colonies fall back upon their true centre of gravity, and natural point of repose, until the ideas of 1766 are resumed, and steadily pursued.

As to the regulations, a great subject of the author's accusation, they are of two sorts; one of a mixed nature, of revenue and trade; the other simply relative to trade. With regard to the former I shall observe, that, in all deliberations concerning America, the ideas of that administration were principally these; to take trade as the primary end, and revenue but as a very subordinate consideration. Where trade was likely to suffer, they did not hesitate for an instant to prefer it to taxes, whose produce at best was contemptible, in comparison of the object which they might endanger. The other of their principles was, to suit the revenue to the object. Where the difficulty of collection, from the nature of the country, and of the revenue establishment, is so very notorious, it was their policy to hold out as few temptations to smuggling as possible, by keeping the duties as nearly as they could on a balance with the risk. On these principles they made many alterations in the port duties of 1764, both in the mode and in the quantity. The author has not attempted to prove them erroneous. He complains enough to shew that he is in an ill humour, not that his adversaries have done amiss.

As to the regulations which were merely relative to commerce, many were then made; and they were all made upon this principle, that many of the colonies, and those some of the most abounding in people, were so situated as to have very few means of traffic with this country. It became therefore our interest to let them into as much foreign trade as could be given them without interfering with our own; and to secure by every method the returns to the mother country. Without some such scheme of enlargement, it was obvious that any benefit we could expect from these colonies must be extremely limited. Accordingly many facilities were given to their trade with the foreign plantations, and with the southern parts of Europe. As to the confining the returns to this country, administration saw the mischief and folly of a plan of indiscriminate restraint. They applied their remedy to that part where the disease existed, and to that only; on this idea they established regulations, far more likely to check the dangerous clandestine trade with Hamburgh and Holland, than this author's friends, or any of their predecessors had ever done.

The friends of the author have a method surely a little whimsical in all this sort of discussions. They have made an innumerable multitude of commercial regulations, at which the trade of England exclaimed with one voice, and many of which have been altered on the unanimous opinion of that trade. Still they go on, just as before, in a sort of droning panegyric on themselves, talking of these regulations as prodigies of wisdom; and, instead of appealing to those who are most affected and the best judges, they turn round in a perpetual circle of their own reasonings and pretences;

* The disturbances have been in Boston only; *and were not in consequence of the late duties.*

they hand you over from one of their own pamphlets to another: "See," say they, "this demonstrated in the Regulations of the Colonies." "See this satisfactorily proved in The Considerations." By and by we shall have another; "See for this The State of the Nation." I wish to take another method in vindicating the opposite system. I refer to the petitions of merchants for those regulations; to their thanks when they were obtained; and to the strong and grateful sense they have ever since expressed of the benefits received under that administration.

All administrations have in their commercial regulations been generally aided by the opinion of some merchants; too frequently by that of a few, and those a sort of favourites: they have been directed by the opinion of one or two merchants, who were to merit in flatteries, and to be paid in contracts; who frequently advised, not for the general good of trade, but for their private advantage. During the administration of which this author complains, the meetings of merchants upon the business of trade were numerous and public; sometimes at the house of the Marquis of Rockingham; sometimes at Mr. Dowdeswell's; sometimes at Sir George Saville's, an house always open to every deliberation favourable to the liberty or the commerce of his country. Nor were these meetings confined to the merchants of London. Merchants and manufacturers were invited from all the considerable towns in England. They conferred with the ministers and active members of parliament. No private views, no local interests prevailed. Never were points in trade settled upon a larger scale of information. They who attended these meetings well know, what ministers they were who heard the most patiently, who comprehended the most clearly, and who provided the most wisely. Let then this author and his friends still continue in possession of the practice of exalting their own abilities, in their pamphlets, and in the newspapers. They never will persuade the public, that the merchants of England were in a general confederacy to sacrifice their own interests to those of North America, and to destroy the vent of their own goods in favour of the manufactures of France and Holland.

Had the friends of this author taken these means of information, his extreme terrours of contraband in the West India islands would have been greatly quieted, and his objections to the opening of the ports would have ceased. He would have learned, from the most satisfactory analysis of the West India trade, that we have the advantage in every essential article of it; and that almost every restriction on our communication with our neighbours there, is a restriction unfavourable to ourselves.

Such were the principles that guided, and the authority that sanctioned, these regulations. No man ever said, that, in the multiplicity of regulations made in the administration of their predecessors, none were useful: some certainly were so; and I defy the author to shew a commercial regulation of that period, which he can prove, from any authority except his own, to have a tendency beneficial to commerce, that has been repealed. So far were that ministry from being guided by a spirit of contradiction or of innovation.

The author's attack on that administration, for their neglect of our claims on foreign powers, is by much the most astonishing instance he has given, or that, I believe, any man ever did give, of an intrepid effrontery. It relates to the Manilla ransom; to the Canada bills; and to the Russian treaty. Could one imagine, that these very things, which he thus chooses to object to others, have been the principal subject of charge against his favourite ministry? Instead of clearing them of these charges, he appears not so much as to have heard of them; but throws them directly upon the administration which succeeded to that of his friends.

It is not always very pleasant to be obliged to produce the detail of this kind of transactions to the public view. I will content myself therefore with giving a short state of facts, which, when the author chooses to contradict, he shall see proved, more, perhaps, to his conviction than to his liking. The first fact then is, that the demand for the Manilla ransom had been in the author's favourite administration, so neglected, as to appear to have been little less than tacitly abandoned. At home, no countenance was given to the claimants; and when it was mentioned in parliament, the then leader did not seem, at least, *a very sanguine advocate in favour of the claim*. These things made it a matter of small difficulty to resume and press that negotiation with Spain. However, so clear was our right, that the then ministers resolved to revive it; and so little time was lost, that though that administration was not completed until the 9th of July 1765, on the 20th of the following August, Gen. Conway transmitted a strong and full remonstrance on that subject to the Earl of Rochefort. The argument, on which the court of Madrid most relied, was the dereliction of that claim by the preceding ministers. However, it was still pushed with so much vigour, that the Spaniards, from a positive denial to pay, offered to refer

the demand to arbitration. That proposition was rejected; and the demand being still pressed, there was all the reason in the world to expect its being brought to a favourable issue; when it was thought proper to change the administration. Whether under their circumstances, and in the time they continued in power, more could be done, the reader will judge; who will hear with astonishment a charge of remissness from those very men, whose inactivity, to call it by no worse a name, laid the chief difficulties in the way of the revived negotiation.

As to the Canada bills, this author thinks proper to assert, "that the proprietors found themselves under a necessity of compounding their demands upon the French court, and accepting terms which they had often rejected, and which the Earl of Halifax had declared he would sooner forfeit his hand than sign."* When I know that the Earl of Halifax says so, the Earl of Halifax shall have an answer; but I persuade myself that his lordship has given no authority for this ridiculous rant. In the mean time, I shall only speak of it as a common concern of that ministry.

In the first place then I observe, that a convention, for the liquidation of the Canada bills, was concluded under the administration of 1766; when nothing was concluded under that of the favourites of this author.

2. This transaction was, in every step of it, carried on in concert with the persons interested, and was terminated to their entire satisfaction. They would have acquiesced perhaps in terms somewhat lower than those which were obtained. The author is indeed too kind to them. He will, however, let them speak for themselves, and shew what their own opinion was of the measures pursued in their favour.† In what manner the execution of the convention has been since provided for, it is not my present business to examine.

3. The proprietors had absolutely despaired of being paid, at any time, any proportion of their demand, until the change of that ministry. The merchants were checked and discountenanced; they had often been told, by some in authority, of the cheap rate at which these Canada bills had been procured; yet the author can talk of the composition of them as a necessity induced by the change in administration. They found themselves indeed, before that change, under a necessity of hinting somewhat of bringing the matter into parliament; but they were soon silenced, and put in mind of the fate which the Newfoundland business had there met with. Nothing struck them more than the strong contrast between the spirit, and method of proceeding, of the two administrations.

4. The Earl of Halifax never did, nor could, refuse to sign this convention; because this convention, as it stands, never was before him.‡

The author's last charge on that ministry, with regard to foreign affairs, is the Russian treaty of commerce, which the author thinks fit to assert, was concluded "on terms the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused to accept of, and which had been deemed by former ministers disadvantageous to the nation, and by the merchants unsafe and unprofitable."§

Both the assertions in this paragraph are equally groundless. The treaty then concluded by Sir George Macartney was not on the terms which the Earl of Buckinghamshire had refused. The Earl of Buckinghamshire never did refuse terms, because the business never came to the point of refusal, or acceptance; all that he did was, to receive the Russian project for a treaty of commerce, and to transmit it to England. This was in November 1764; and he left Petersburgh the January following, before he could even receive an answer from his own court. The conclusion of the treaty fell to his successor. Whoever will be at the trouble to compare it with the treaty of 1734, will, I believe, confess, that, if the former ministers could have obtained such terms, they were criminal in not accepting them.

But the merchants "deemed them unsafe and unprofitable." What merchants? As no treaty ever was more maturely considered, so the opinion of the Russia merchants in London

* P. 24.

† "They are happy in having found, in your zeal for the dignity of this nation, the means of liquidating their claims, and of concluding with the court of France a convention for the final satisfaction of their demands; and have given us commission, in their names, and on their behalf, most earnestly to entreat your acceptance of their grateful acknowledgments.—Whether they consider themselves as Britons, or as men more particularly profiting by your generous and spirited interposition, they see great reasons to be thankful, for having been supported by a minister, in whose public affections, in whose wisdom and activity, both the national honour, and the interest of individuals, have been at once so well supported and secured." Thanks of the Canada merchants to General Conway, London, April 28, 1766.

‡ See the Convention itself printed by Owen and Harrison, Warwick-lane, 1766; particularly the articles two and thirteen.

§ P. 23.

was all along taken; and all the instructions sent over were in exact conformity to that opinion. Our minister there made no step without having previously consulted our merchants resident in Petersburgh, who, before the signing of the treaty, gave the most full and unanimous testimony in its favour. In their address to our minister at that court, among other things, they say, "It may afford some additional satisfaction to your excellency, to receive a public acknowledgment of *the entire and reserved approbation of every article* in this treaty, from us who are so immediately and so nearly concerned in its consequences." This was signed by the consul general, and every British merchant in Petersburgh.

The approbation of those immediately concerned in the consequences is nothing to this author. He and his friends have so much tenderness for people's interests, and understand them so much better than they do themselves, that, whilst these politicians are contending for the best of possible terms, the claimants are obliged to go without any terms at all.

One of the first and justest complaints against the administration of the author's friends, was the want of vigour in their foreign negotiations. Their immediate successors endeavoured to correct that errour, along with others; and there was scarcely a foreign court, in which the new spirit that had arisen was not sensibly felt, acknowledged, and sometimes complained of. On their coming into administration, they found the demolition of Dunkirk entirely at a stand; instead of demolition, they found construction; for the French were then at work on the repair of the jettees. On the remonstrances of General Conway, some parts of these jettees were immediately destroyed. The Duke of Richmond personally surveyed the place, and obtained a fuller knowledge of its true state and condition than any of our ministers had done; and, in consequence, had larger offers from the Duke of Choiseul than had ever been received. But, as these were short of our just expectations under the treaty, he rejected them. Our then ministers, knowing that, in their administration, the people's minds were set at ease upon all the essential points of public and private liberty, and that no project of theirs could endanger the concord of the empire, were under no restraint from pursuing every just demand upon foreign nations.

The author, towards the end of this work, falls into reflections upon the state of public morals in this country: he draws use from this doctrine, by recommending his friend to the king and the public, as another Duke of Sully; and he concludes the whole performance with a very devout prayer.

The prayers of politicians may sometimes be sincere; and as this prayer is in substance, that the author, or his friends, may be soon brought into power, I have great reason to believe it is very much from the heart. It must be owned too that after he has drawn such a picture, such a shocking picture, of the state of this country, he has great faith in thinking the means he prays for sufficient to relieve us: after the character he has given of its inhabitants of all ranks and classes, he has great charity in caring much about them; and indeed, no less hope, in being of opinion, that such a detestable nation can never become the care of Providence. He has not even found five good men in our devoted city.

He talks indeed of men of virtue and ability. But where are his *men* of virtue and ability to be found? Are they in the present administration? never were a set of people more blackened by this author. Are they among the party of those (no small body) who adhere to the system of 1766? these, it is the great purpose of this book to calumniate. Are they the persons who acted with his great friend, since the change in 1762, to his removal in 1765? scarcely any of these are now out of employment; and we are in possession of his desideratum. Yet I think he hardly means to select, even some of the highest of them, as examples fit for the reformation of a corrupt world.

He observes, that the virtue of the most exemplary prince that ever swayed a sceptre "can never warm or illuminate the body of his people, if foul mirrors are placed so near him as to refract and dissipate the rays at their first emanation."* Without observing upon the propriety of this metaphor, or asking how mirrors come to have lost their old quality of reflecting, and to have acquired that of refracting, and dissipating rays, and how far their foulness will account for this change; the remark itself is common and true: no less true, and equally surprising from him, is that which immediately precedes it;† "it is in vain to endeavour to check the progress of irreligion and licentiousness, by punishing such crimes in *one individual*, if others equally culpable are rewarded with the honours and emoluments of the state." I am not in the secret of the author's manner of writing; but it appears to me, that he must intend these reflections as a satire upon the administration of his happy years.

* P. 46. † P. 46.

Were ever the honours and emoluments of the state more lavishly squandered upon persons scandalous in their lives than during that period? In these scandalous lives, was there any thing more scandalous than the mode of punishing *one culpable individual*? In that individual, is any thing more culpable than his having been seduced by the example of some of those very persons by whom he was thus persecuted?

The author is so eager to attack others, that he provides but indifferently for his own defence. I believe, without going beyond the page I have now before me, he is very sensible, that I have sufficient matter of further, and, if possible, of heavier, charge against his friends, upon his own principle. But it is because the advantage is too great, that I decline making use of it. I wish the author had not thought that all methods are lawful in party. Above all, he ought to have taken care not to wound his enemies through the sides of his country. This he has done, by making that monstrous and overcharged picture of the distresses of our situation. No wonder that he, who finds this country in the same condition with that of France at the time of Henry the Fourth, could also find a resemblance between his political friend and the Duke of Sully. As to those personal resemblances, people will often judge of them from their affections: they may imagine in these clouds whatsoever figures they please; but what is the conformation of that eye which can discover a resemblance of this country and these times to those with which the author compares them? France, a country just recovered out of twenty-five years of the most cruel and desolating civil war that perhaps was ever known. The kingdom, under the veil of momentary quiet, full of the most atrocious political, operating upon the most furious fanatical factions. Some pretenders even to the crown; and those who did not pretend to the whole, aimed at the partition of the monarchy. There were almost as many competitors as provinces; and all abetted by the greatest, the most ambitious, and most enterprising power in Europe. No place safe from treason; no, not the bosoms on which the most amiable prince that ever lived reposed his head; not his mistresses; not even his queen. As to the finances, they had scarce an existence, but as a matter of plunder to the managers, and of grants to insatiable and ungrateful courtiers.

How can our author have the heart to describe this as any sort of parallel to our situation? *To be sure, an April* shower has some resemblance to a water spout; for they are both wet: and there is some likeness between a summer evening's breeze and an hurricane; they are both wind: but who can compare our disturbances, our situation, or our finances, to those of France in the time of Henry? Great Britain is indeed at this time wearied, but not broken, with the efforts of a victorious foreign war; not sufficiently relieved by an inadequate peace, but somewhat benefited by that peace, and infinitely by the consequences of that war. The powers of Europe awed by our victories, and lying in ruins upon every side of us. Burthened indeed we are with debt, but abounding with resources. We have a trade, not perhaps equal to our wishes, but more than ever we possessed. In effect, no pretender to the crown; nor nutriment for such desperate and destructive factions as have formerly shaken this kingdom.

As to our finances, the author trifles with us. When Sully came to those of France, in what order was any part of the financial system? or what system was there at all? There is no man in office who must not be sensible that ours is, without the act of any parading minister, the most regular and orderly system perhaps that ever was known; the best secured against all frauds in the collection, and all misapplication in the expenditure of public money.

I admit that, in this flourishing state of things, there are appearances enough to excite uneasiness and apprehension. I admit there is a canker-worm in the rose;

——————— medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipsis floribus angat.

This is nothing else than a spirit of disconnection, of distrust, and of treachery among public men. It is no accidental evil; nor has its effect been trusted to the usual frailty of nature; the distemper has been inoculated. The author is sensible of it, and we lament it together. This distemper is alone sufficient to take away considerably from the benefits of our constitution and situation, and perhaps to render their continuance precarious. If these evil dispositions should spread much farther, they must end in our destruction; for nothing can save a people destitute of public and private faith. However, the author, for the present state of things, has extended the charge by much too widely; as men are but too apt to take the measure of all mankind from their own particular acquaintance. Barren as this age may be in the growth of honour and virtue, the country does not want, at this moment, as

strong, and those not a few examples, as were ever known, of an unshaken adherence to principle, and attachment to connection, against every allurement of interest. Those examples are not furnished by the great alone; nor by those, whose activity in public affairs may render it suspected that they make such a character one of the rounds in their ladder of ambition; but by men more quiet, and more in the shade, on whom an unmixed sense of honour alone could operate. Such examples indeed are not furnished in great abundance among those who are the subjects of the author's panegyric. He must look for them in another camp. He who complains of the ill effects of a divided and heterogeneous administration, is not justifiable in labouring to render odious in the eyes of the public those men, whose principles, whose maxims of policy, and whose personal character, can alone administer a remedy to this capital evil of the age; neither is he consistent with himself, in constantly extolling those whom he knows to be the authors of the very mischief of which he complains, and which the whole nation feels so deeply.

The persons who are the objects of his dislike and complaint are many of them of the first families, and weightiest properties, in the kingdom; but infinitely more distinguished for their untainted honour public and private, and their zealous but sober attachment to the constitution of their country, than they can be by any birth, or any station. If they are the friends of any one great man rather than another, it is not that they make his aggrandizement the end of their union; or because they know him to be the most active in cabalting for his connections the largest and speediest emoluments. It is because they know him, by personal experience, to have wise and enlarged ideas of the public good, and an invincible constancy in adhering to it; because they are convinced, by the whole tenour of his actions, that he will never negotiate away their honour or his own: and that, in or out of power, change of situation will make no alteration in his conduct. This will give to such a person, in such a body, an authority and respect that no minister ever enjoyed among his venal dependants, in the highest plenitude of his power; such as servility never can give, such as ambition never can receive or relish.

This body will often be reproached by their adversaries, for want of ability in their political transactions; they will be ridiculed for missing many favourable conjunctures, and not profiting of several brilliant opportunities of fortune; but they must be contented to endure that reproach; for they cannot acquire the reputation of *that kind* of ability without losing all the other reputation they possess.

They will be charged too with a dangerous spirit of exclusion and proscription, for being unwilling to mix in schemes of administration, which have no bond of union, or principle of confidence. That charge too they must suffer with patience. If the reason of the thing had not spoken loudly enough, the miserable examples of the several administrations constructed upon the idea of systematic discord would be enough to frighten them from such monstrous and ruinous conjunctions. It is however false, that the idea of an united administration carries with it that of a proscription of any other party. It does indeed imply the necessity of having the great strong holds of government in well-united hands, in order to secure the predominance of right and uniform principles; of having the capital offices of deliberation and execution of those who can deliberate with mutual confidence, and who will execute what is resolved with firmness and fidelity. If this system cannot be rigorously adhered to in practice (and what system can be so?) it ought to be the constant aim of good men to approach as nearly to it as possible. No system of that kind can be formed, which will not leave room fully sufficient for healing coalitions: but no coalition, which, under the specious name of independency, carries in its bosom the unreconciled principles of the original discord of parties, ever was, or will be, an healing coalition. Nor will the mind of our Sovereign ever know repose, his kingdom settlement, or his business order, efficiency, or grace with his people, until things are established upon the basis of some set of men, who are trusted by the public, and who can trust one another.

This comes rather nearer to the mark than the author's description of a proper administration, under the name of *men of ability and virtue*, which conveys no definite idea at all; nor does it apply specifically to our grand national distemper. All parties pretend to these qualities. The present ministry, no favourites of the author, will be ready enough to declare themselves persons of virtue and ability; and if they choose a vote for that purpose, perhaps it would not be quite impossible for them to procure it. But, if the disease be this distrust and disconnection, it is easy to know who are sound, and who are tainted; who are fit to restore us to health, who to continue, and to spread the contagion. The present ministry being made up of draughts from all parties in the kingdom, if they should profess any adhe-

rence to the connections they have left, they must convict themselves of the blackest treachery. They therefore choose rather to renounce the principle itself, and to brand it with the name of pride and faction. This test with certainty discriminates the opinions of men. The other is a description vague and unsatisfactory.

As to the unfortunate gentlemen who may at any time compose that system, which, under the plausible title of an administration, subsists but for the establishment of weakness and confusion; they fall into different classes, with different merits. I think the situation of some people in that state may deserve a certain degree of compassion; at the same time that they furnish an example, which, it is to be hoped, by being a severe one, will have its effect, at least, on the growing generation; if an original seduction, on plausible but hollow pretences, into loss of honour, friendship, consistency, security, and repose, can furnish it. It is possible to draw, even from the very prosperity of ambition, examples of terrour, and motives to compassion.

I believe the instances are exceedingly rare of men immediately passing ever a clear marked line of virtue into declared vice and corruption. There are a sort of middle tints and shades between the two extremes; there is something uncertain on the confines of the two empires which they first pass through, and which renders the change easy and imperceptible. There are even a sort of splendid impositions so well contrived, that, at the very time the path of rectitude is quitted for ever, men seem to be advancing into some higher and nobler road of public conduct. Not that such impositions are strong enough in themselves; but a powerful interest, often concealed from those whom it affects, works at the bottom, and secures the operation. Men are thus debauched away from those legitimate connections, which they had formed on a judgment, early perhaps but sufficiently mature, and wholly unbiassed. They do not quit them upon any ground of complaint, for grounds of just complaint may exist, but upon the flattering and most dangerous of all principles, that of mending what is well. Gradually they are habituated to other company; and a change in their habitudes soon makes a way for a change in their opinions. Certain persons are no longer so very frightful, when they come to be known and to be serviceable. As to their old friends, the transition is easy; from friendship to civility; from civility to enmity: few are the steps from dereliction to persecution.

People not very well grounded in the principles of public morality find a set of maxims in office ready made for them, which they assume as naturally and inevitably, as any of the insignia or instruments of the situation. A certain tone of the solid and practical is immediately acquired. Every former profession of public spirit is to be considered as a debauch of youth, or, at best, as a visionary scheme of unattainable perfection. The very idea of consistency is exploded. The convenience of the business of the day is to furnish the principle for doing it. Then the whole ministerial cant is quickly got by heart. The prevalence of faction is to be lamented. All opposition is to be regarded as the effect of envy and disappointed ambition. All administrations are declared to be alike. The same necessity justifies all their measures. It is no longer a matter of discussion, who or what administration is; but that administration is to be supported, is a general maxim. Flattering themselves that their power is become necessary to the support of all order and government; every thing which tends to the support of that power is sanctified, and becomes a part of the public interest.

Growing every day more formed to affairs, and better knit in their limbs, when the occasion (now the only rule) requires it, they become capable of sacrificing those very persons to whom they had before sacrificed their original friends. It is now only in the ordinary course of business to alter an opinion, or to betray a connection. Frequently relinquishing one set of men and adopting another, they grow into a total indifference to human feeling, as they had before to moral obligation; until, at length, no one original impression remains upon their minds; every principle is obliterated; every sentiment effaced.

In the mean time, that power, which all these changes aimed at securing, remains still as tottering and as uncertain as ever. They are delivered up into the hands of those who feel neither respect for their persons, nor gratitude for their favours; who are put about them in appearance to serve, in reality to govern them; and, when the signal is given, to abandon and destroy them in order to set up some newer dupe of ambition, who in his turn is to be abandoned and destroyed. Thus living in a state of continual uneasiness and ferment, softened only by the miserable consolation of giving now and then proferments to those for whom they have no value; they are unhappy in their situation, yet find it impossible to resign. Until, at length, soured in temper, and disappointed by the very attainment of their ends, in some angry, in some haughty, or some

negligent moment, they incur the displeasure of those upon whom they have rendered their very being dependent. Then *perierunt tempora longi servitii;* they are cast off with scorn; they are turned out, emptied of all natural character, of all intrinsic worth, of all essential dignity, and deprived of every consolation of friendship. Having rendered all retreat to old principles ridiculous, and to old regards impracticable, not being able to counterfeit pleasure, or to discharge discontent, nothing being sincere, or right, or balanced in their minds, it is more than a chance, that, in the delirium of the last stage of their distempered power, they make an insane political testament, by which they throw all their remaining weight and consequence into the scale of their declared enemies, and the avowed authors of their destruction. Thus they finish their course. Had it been possible that the whole, or even a great part of these effects on their minds, I say nothing of the effect upon their fortunes, could have appeared to them in their first departure from the right line, it is certain they would have rejected every temptation with horrour. The principle of these remarks, like every good principle in morality, is trite; but its frequent application is not the less necessary.

As to others, who are plain practical men, they have been guiltless at all times of all public pretence. Neither the author nor any one else, has reason to be angry with them. They belonged to his friend for their interest; for their interest they quitted him; and when it is their interest, he may depend upon it, they will return to their former connection. Such people subsist at all times, and, though the nuisance of all, are at no time a worthy subject of discussion. It is false virtue and plausible errour that do the mischief.

If men come to government with right dispositions, they have not that unfavourable subject which this author represents to work upon. Our circumstances are indeed critical; but then they are the critical circumstances of a strong and mighty nation. If corruption and meanness are greatly spread, they are not spread universally. Many public men are hitherto examples of public spirit and integrity. Whole parties, as far as large bodies can be uniform, have preserved character. However they may be deceived in some particulars, I know of no set of men among us, which does not contain persons, on whom the nation, in a difficult exigence, may well value itself. Private life, which is the nursery of the commonwealth, is yet in general pure, and on the whole disposed to virtue; and the people at large want neither generosity nor spirit. No small part of that very luxury, which is so much the subject of the author's declamation, but which, in most parts of life, by being well balanced and diffused, is only decency and convenience, has perhaps as many, or more, good than evil consequences attending it. It certainly excites industry, nourishes emulation, and inspires some sense of personal value into all ranks of people. What we want is to establish more fully an opinion of uniformity, and consistency of character, in the leading men of the state; such as will restore some confidence to profession and appearance, such as will fix subordination upon esteem. Without this, all schemes are begun at the wrong end. All who join in them are liable to their consequences. All men who, under whatever pretext, take a part in the formation or the support of systems constructed in such a manner as must, in their nature, disable them from the execution of their duty, have made themselves guilty of all the present distraction, and of the future ruin, which they may bring upon their country.

It is a serious affair, this studied disunion in government. In cases where union is most consulted in the constitution of a ministry, and where persons are best disposed to promote it, differences, from the various ideas of men, will arise; and, from their passions, will often ferment into violent heats, so as greatly to disorder all public business. What must be the consequence, when the very distemper is made the basis of the constitution; and the original weakness of human nature is still further enfeebled by art and contrivance? It must subvert government from the very foundation. It turns our public councils into the most mischievous cabals; where the consideration is, not how the nation's business shall be carried on, but how those who ought to carry it on shall circumvent each other. In such a state of things, no order, uniformity, dignity, or effect, can appear in our proceedings either at home or abroad. Nor will it make much difference, whether some of the constituent parts of such an administration are men of virtue or ability, or not; supposing it possible that such men, with their eyes open, should choose to make a part in such a body.

The effects of all human contrivances are in the hand of Providence. I do not like to answer, as our author so readily does, for the event of any speculation. But sure the nature of our disorders, if any thing, must indicate the proper remedy. Men who act steadily on the

principles I have stated may in all events be very serviceable to their country; in one case, by furnishing (if their Sovereign should be so advised) an administration formed upon ideas very different from those which have for some time been unfortunately fashionable. But, if this should not be the case, they may be still serviceable; for the example of a large body of men, steadily sacrificing ambition to principle, can never be without use. It will certainly be prolific, and draw others to an imitation. *Vera gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur.*

I do not think myself of consequence enough to imitate my author, in troubling the world with the prayers or wishes I may form for the public: full as little am I disposed to imitate his professions; those professions are long since worn out in the political service. If the work will not speak for the author, his own declarations deserve but little credit.

APPENDIX.

So much misplaced industry has been used by the author of The State of the Nation, as well as by other writers, to infuse discontent into the people, on account of the late war, and of the effects of our national debt; that nothing ought to be omitted which may tend to disabuse the public upon these subjects. When I had gone through the foregoing sheets, I recollected, that, in pages 58, 59, 60, I only gave the comparative states of the duties collected by the excise at large; together with the quantities of strong beer brewed in the two periods which are there compared. It might be still thought, that some other articles of popular consumption, of general convenience, and connected with our manufactures, might possibly have declined. I therefore now think it right to lay before the reader the state of the produce of three capital duties on such articles; duties which have frequently been made the subject of popular complaint. The duty on candles; that on soap, paper, &c.; and that on hides.

Average of net produce of duty on soap, &c. for eight years, ending 1767, - - - - - - - -	£.264,902
Average of ditto for eight years, ending 1754, - - - - - - -	228,114
Average increase,	£.36,788

Average of net produce of duty on candles for 8 years, ending 1767,	£.155,789
Average ditto for eight years, ending 1754, - - - - - - - -	136,716
Average increase,	£.19,073

Average of net produce of duty on hides, 8 years, ending 1767, -	£.189,216
Ditto 8 years, ending 1754, - - -	168,200
Average increase,	£.21,016

This increase has not arisen from any additional duties. None have been imposed on these articles during the war. Notwithstanding the burthens of the war, and the late dearness of provisions, the consumption of all these articles has increased, and the revenue along with it.

There is another point in The State of the Nation, to which, I fear, I have not been so full in my answer as I ought to have been, and as I am well warranted to be. The author has endeavoured to throw a suspicion, or something more, on that salutary, and indeed necessary measure of opening the ports in Jamaica. "Orders were given,"* says he, "in *August*, 1765, for the free admission of Spanish vessels into all the colonies." He then observes, that the exports to Jamaica fell £.40,904 short of those of 1764; and that the exports of the succeeding year, 1766, fell short of those of 1765, about eighty pounds; from whence he wisely infers, that this decline of exports being *since* the relaxation of the laws of trade, there is a just ground of suspicion, that the colonies have been supplied with foreign commodities instead of British.

Here, as usual with him, the author builds on a fact which is absolutely false; and which, being so, renders his whole hypothesis absurd and impossible. He asserts, that the order for

* His note, p. 22.

admitting Spanish vessels was given in *August*, 1765. That order was not *signed at the treasury board until the 15th day of the November following*; and therefore so far from affecting the exports of the year 1765, that, supposing all possible diligence in the commissioners of the customs in expediting that order, and every advantage of vessels ready to sail, and the most favourable wind, it would hardly even arrive in Jamaica within the limits of that year.

This order could therefore by no possibility be a cause of the decrease of exports in 1765. If it had any mischievous operation, it could not be before 1766. In that year, according to our author, the exports fell short of the preceding, just *eighty* pounds. He is welcome to that diminution; and to all the consequences he can draw from it.

But, as an auxiliary to account for this dreadful loss, he brings in the Free-port act, which he observes (for his convenience) to have been made in spring, 1766; but (for his convenience likewise) he forgets, that, by the express provision of the act, the regulation was not to be in force in Jamaica until the November following. Miraculous must be the activity of that contraband whose operation in America could, before the end of that year, have re-acted upon England, and checked the exportation from hence! unless he chooses to suppose, that the merchants, at whose solicitation this act had been obtained, were so frighted at the accomplishment of their own most earnest and anxious desire, that, before any good or evil effect from it could happen, they immediately put a stop to all further exportation.

It is obvious that we must look for the true effect of that act at the time of its first possible operation, that is, in the year 1767. On this idea how stands the account?

1764, Exports to Jamaica, -	£.456,528
1765, - - - - - - - - - -	415,624
1766, - - - - - - - - - -	415,544
1767, (first year of the Free-port act)	467,681

This author, for the sake of a present momentary credit, will hazard any future and permanent disgrace. At the time he wrote, the account of 1767 could not be made up. This was the very first year of the trial of the Free-port act; and we find that the sale of British commodities is so far from lessened by that act, that the export of 1767 amounts to £.52,000 more than that of either of the two preceding years, and is £.11,000 above that of his standard year 1764. If I could prevail on myself to argue in favour of a great commercial scheme from the appearance of things in a single year, I should from this increase of export infer the beneficial effects of that measure. In truth, it is not wanting. Nothing but the thickest ignorance of the Jamaica trade could have made any one entertain a fancy, that the least ill effect on our commerce could follow from this opening of the ports. But, if the author argues the effect of regulations in the American trade from the export of the year in which they are made, or even of the following; why did he not apply this rule to his own? He had the same paper before him which I have now before me. He must have seen that in his standard year, (the year 1764,) the principal year of his new regulations, the export fell no less than £.128,450 short of that in 1763! Did the export trade revive by these regulations in 1765, during which year they continued in their full force? It fell about £.40,000 still lower. Here is a fall of £.168,000; to account for which, would have become the author much better than piddling for an £.80 fall in the year 1766 (the only year in which *the order* he objects to could operate,) or in presuming a fall of exports from a regulation which took place only in November 1766; whose effects could not appear until the following year; and which, when they do appear, utterly overthrow all his flimsy reasons and affected suspicions upon the effect of opening the ports.

This author, in the same paragraph, says, that "it was asserted by *the American factors and agents*, that the commanders of our ships of war and tenders, having custom-house commissions, and the strict orders given in 1764 for a due execution of the laws of trade in the colonies, had deterred the Spaniards from trading with us; that the sale of British manufactures in the West Indies had been greatly lessened, and the receipt of large sums of specie prevented."

If the *American factors and agents* asserted this, they had good ground for their assertion. They knew that the Spanish vessels had been driven from our ports. The author does not positively deny the fact. If he should, it will be proved. When the factors connected this measure and its natural consequences, with an actual fall in the exports to Jamaica, to no less an amount than £.128,450 in one year, and with a further fall in the next, is their assertion very wonderful? The author himself is full as much alarmed by a fall of only £.40,000; for, giving him the facts which he chooses to coin, it is no more. The expulsion of the Spanish vessels must certainly have been one cause, if not of the first declension of the exports, yet

of their continuance in their reduced state. Other causes had their operation, without doubt. In what degree each cause produced its effect, it is hard to determine. But the fact of a fall of exports upon the restraining plan, and of a rise upon the taking place of the enlarging plan, is established beyond all contradiction.

This author says, that the facts relative to the Spanish trade were asserted by *American factors and agents;* insinuating, that the ministry of 1766 had no better authority for their plan of enlargement than such assertions. The moment he chooses it, he shall see the very same thing asserted by governors of provinces, by commanders of men of war, and by officers of the customs; persons the most bound in duty to prevent contraband, and the most interested in the seizures to be made in consequence of strict regulation. I suppress them for the present; wishing that the author may not drive me to a more full discussion of this matter than it may be altogether prudent to enter into. I wish he had not made any of these discussions necessary.

THOUGHTS

THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS.

ıcultum, intestinum, domesticum malum, non modo non existit, verum etiam opprimit, antiquam perspicere atque explorare potuerit.—Cic

1770.

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not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. Whatever original energy may be supposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiours; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean,—when public affairs are steadily and quietly conducted; and when government is nothing but a continued scuffle between the magistrate and the multitude; in which sometimes the one and sometimes the other is uppermost; in which they alternately yield and prevail, in a series of contemptible victories, and scandalous submissions. The temper of the people among whom he presides ought therefore to be the first study of a statesman. And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.

To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the present possessors of power, to lament the past, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind; indeed the necessary effects of the ignorance and levity of the vulgar. Such complaints and humours have existed in all times; yet as all times have not been alike, true political sagacity manifests itself, in distinguishing that complaint which only characterizes the general infirmity of human nature, from those which are symptoms of the particular distemperature of our own air and season.

Nobody, I believe, will consider it merely as the language of spleen or disappointment, if I say, that there is something particularly alarming in the present conjuncture. There is hardly a man, in or out of power, who holds any other

language. That government is at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws are despoiled of all their respected and salutary terrours; that their inaction is a subject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that rank, and office, and title, and all the solemn plausibilities of the world, have lost their reverence and effect; that our foreign politics are as much deranged as our domestic œconomy; that our dependencies are slackened in their affection, and loosened from their obedience; that we know neither how to yield nor how to enforce; that hardly any thing above or below, abroad or at home, is sound and entire; but that disconnection and confusion, in offices, in parties, in families, in parliament, in the nation, prevail beyond the disorders of any former time; these are facts universally admitted and lamented.

This state of things is the more extraordinary, because the great parties which formerly divided and agitated the kingdom are known to be in a manner entirely dissolved. No great external calamity has visited the nation; no pestilence or famine. We do not labour at present under any scheme of taxation new or oppressive in the quantity or in the mode. Nor are we engaged in unsuccessful war; in which, our misfortunes might easily pervert our judgment; and our minds, sore from the loss of national glory, might feel every blow of fortune as a crime in government.

It is impossible that the cause of this strange distemper should not sometimes become a subject of discourse. It is a compliment due, and which I willingly pay, to those who administer our affairs, to take notice in the first place of their speculation. Our ministers are of opinion, that the increase of our trade and manufactures, that our growth by colonization, and by conquest, have concurred to accumulate immense wealth in the hands of some individuals; and this again being dispersed among the people, has rendered them universally proud, ferocious, and ungovernable; that the insolence of some from their enormous wealth, and the boldness of others from a guilty poverty, have rendered them capable of the most atrocious attempts; so that they have trampled upon all subordination, and violently borne down the unarmed laws of a free government; barriers too feeble against the fury of a populace so fierce and licentious as ours. They contend, that no adequate provocation has been given for so spreading a discontent; our affairs having been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and consummate wisdom. The wicked industry of some libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few disappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

Nothing indeed can be more unnatural than the present convulsions of this country, if the above account be a true one. I confess I shall assent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulsion of the clearest and firmest proofs; because their account resolves itself into this short but discouraging proposition, "That we have a very good ministry, but that we are a very bad people;" that we set ourselves to bite the hand that feeds us; that with a malignant insanity we oppose the measures, and ungratefully vilify the persons, of those whose sole object is our own peace and prosperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character, (such they are constantly represented by these gentlemen,) are sufficient to excite this disturbance, very perverse must be the disposition of that people, among whom such a disturbance can be excited by such means. It is besides no small aggravation of the public misfortune, that the disease, on this hypothesis, appears to be without remedy. If the wealth of the nation be the cause of its turbulence, I imagine it is not proposed to introduce poverty, as a constable to keep the peace. If our dominions abroad are the roots which feed all this rank luxuriance of sedition, it is not intended to cut them off in order to famish the fruit. If our liberty has enfeebled the executive power, there is no design, I hope, to call in the aid of despotism, to fill up the deficiencies of law. Whatever may be intended, these things are not yet professed. We seem therefore to be driven to absolute despair; for we have no other materials to work upon, but those out of which God has been pleased to form the inhabitants of this island. If these be radically and essentially vicious, all that can be said is, that those men are very unhappy, to whose fortune or duty it falls to administer the affairs of this untoward people. I hear it indeed sometimes asserted, that a steady perseverance in the present measures, and a rigorous punishment of those who oppose them, will in course of time infallibly put an end to these disorders. But this, in my opinion, is said without much observation of our present disposition, and without any knowledge at all of the general nature of mankind. If the matter of which this nation is composed be so very fermentable as these gentlemen describe it, leaven never will be wanting to work it up, as long as discontent, revenge and ambition, have existence in the world. Particular punishments are the cure for accidental distempers in the state; they

inflame rather than allay those heats which arise from the settled mismanagement of the government, or from a natural indisposition in the people. It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in the use of strong measures: and firmness is then only a virtue when it accompanies the most perfect wisdom. In truth, inconstancy is a sort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.

I am not one of those who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say, that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people. Experience may perhaps justify me in going further. Where popular discontents have been very prevalent, it may well be presumed and supported, that there has been generally something found amiss in the constitution, or in the conduct of government. The people have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their errour, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the state, it is far otherwise. They certainly may act ill by design, as well as by mistake. "*Les révolutions qui arrivent dans les grands états ne sont point un effet du hazard, ni du caprice des peuples. Rien ne révolte les grands d'un royaume dans un gouvernement foible et dérangé. Pour le populace, ce n'est jamais par envie d'attaquer celle-ci se soulève, mais par impatience de souffrir.*"* These are the words of a great man; a minister of state; and a zealous asserter of monarchy. They are applied to the *system of Sully* which was adopted by Henry the third of France, and to the dreadful consequences it produced. What he says of revolutions, is equally true of all great disturbances. If this presumption in favour of the subjects against the trustees of power be not the more reasonable, I am sure it is the more comfortable speculation; because it is more easy to change an administration than to reform a people.

Upon a supposition, therefore, that in the opening of the cause the presumptions stand equally balanced between the parties, there seems sufficient ground to entitle any person to fair hearing, who attempts some other scheme beside that easy one which is fashionable in some fashionable companies, to account for the present discontents. It is not to be argued that we endure no grievance, because our grievances are not of the same sort with those under which we laboured formerly; not precisely those which we bore from the Tudors, or vindicated on the Stuarts. A great change has taken place in the affairs of this country. For in the silent lapse of events as material alterations have been insensibly brought about in the policy and character of governments and nations, as those which have been marked by the tumult of public revolutions.

It is very rare indeed for men to be wrong in their feelings concerning public misconduct; as rare to be right in their speculation upon the cause of it. I have constantly observed, that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politics. There are but very few, who are capable of comparing and digesting what passes before their eyes at different times and occasions, so as to form the whole into a distinct system. But in books every thing is settled for them, without the exertion of any considerable diligence or sagacity. For which reason men are wise with but little reflection, and good with little self-denial, in the business of all times except their own. We are very uncorrupt and tolerably enlightened judges of the transactions of past ages; where no passions deceive, and where the whole train of circumstances, from the trifling cause to the tragical event, is set in an orderly series before us. Few are the partisans of departed tyranny; and to be a Whig on the business of an hundred years ago, is very consistent with every advantage of present servility. This retrospective wisdom, and historical patriotism, are things of wonderful convenience: and serve admirably to reconcile the old quarrel between speculation and practice. Many a stern republican, after gorging himself with a full feast of admiration of the Grecian commonwealths and of our true Saxon constitution, and discharging all the splendid bile of his virtuous indignation on King John and King James, sits down perfectly satisfied to the coarsest work and homeliest job of the day he lives in. I believe there was no professed admirer of Henry the Eighth among the instruments of the last King James; nor in the court of Henry the Eighth, was there, I dare say, to be found a single advocate for the favourites of Richard the Second.

No complaisance to our court, or to our age, can make me believe nature to be so changed, but that public liberty will be among us, as among our ancestors, obnoxious to some person or other; and that opportunities will be furnished for attempting at least, some alteration to the prejudice of our constitution. These attempts will naturally vary in their mode, according to times and circumstances. For ambition, though it has ever the same general views, has not at all times the same means,

* Mem. de Sully, tom. i. p. 133.

nor the same particular objects. A great deal of the furniture of ancient tyranny is worn to rags; the rest is entirely out of fashion. Besides, there are few statesmen so very clumsy and awkward in their business, as to fall into the identical snare which has proved fatal to their predecessors. When an arbitrary imposition is attempted upon the subject, undoubtedly it will not bear on its forehead the name of *Ship-money*. There is no danger that an extension of the *Forest laws* should be the chosen mode of oppression in this age. And when we hear any instance of ministerial rapacity, to the prejudice of the rights of private life, it will certainly not be the exaction of two hundred pullets, from a woman of fashion, for leave to lie with her own husband.*

Every age has its own manners, and its politics dependent upon them; and the same attempts will not be made against a constitution fully formed and matured, that were used to destroy it in the cradle, or to resist its growth during its infancy.

Against the being of parliament, I am satisfied, no designs have ever been entertained since the revolution. Every one must perceive, that it is strongly the interest of the court, to have some second cause interposed between the ministers and the people. The gentlemen of the house of commons have an interest equally strong, in sustaining the part of that intermediate cause. However they may hire out the *usufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the *fee and inheritance*. Accordingly those who have been of the most known devotion to the will and pleasure of a court, have at the same time been most forward in asserting a high authority in the house of commons. When they knew who were to use that authority, and how it was to be employed, they thought it never could be carried too far. It must be always the wish of an unconstitutional statesman, that a house of commons who are entirely dependent upon him, should have every right of the people entirely dependent upon their pleasure. It was soon discovered, that the forms of a free, and the ends of an arbitrary government, were things not altogether incompatible.

The power of the crown, almost dead and rotten as Prerogative, has grown up anew, with much more strength, and far less odium, under the name of Influence. An influence, which operated without noise and without violence; an influence which converted the very antagonist, into the instrument, of power; which contained in itself a perpetual principle of growth and renovation; and which the distresses and the prosperity of the country equally tended to augment, was an admirable substitute for a prerogative, that, being only the offspring of antiquated prejudices, had moulded in its original stamina irresistible principles of decay and dissolution. The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary system; the interest of active men in the state is a foundation perpetual and infallible. However, some circumstances, arising, it must be confessed, in a great degree from accident, prevented the effects of this influence for a long time from breaking out in a manner capable of exciting any serious apprehensions. Although government was strong and flourished exceedingly, the *court* had drawn far less advantage than one would imagine from this great source of power.

At the revolution, the crown, deprived, for the ends of the revolution itself, of many prerogatives, was found too weak to struggle against all the difficulties which pressed so new and unsettled a government. The court was obliged therefore to delegate a part of its powers to men of such interest as could support, and of such fidelity as would adhere to, its establishment. Such men were able to draw in a greater number to a concurrence in the common defence. This connexion, necessary at first, continued long after convenient; and properly conducted might indeed, in all situations, be an useful instrument of government. At the same time, through the intervention of men of popular weight and character, the people possessed a security for their just portion of importance in the state. But as the title to the crown grew stronger by long possession, and by the constant increase of its influence, these helps have of late seemed to certain persons no better than incumbrances. The powerful managers for government were not sufficiently submissive to the pleasure of the possessors of immediate and personal favour, sometimes from a confidence in their own strength natural and acquired; sometimes from a fear of offending their friends, and weakening that lead in the country, which gave them a consideration independent of the court. Men acted as if the court could receive, as well as confer, an obligation. The influence of government, thus divided in appearance between the court and the leaders of parties, became in many cases an accession rather to the popular than to the royal scale; and some part of that

* "Uxor Hugonis de Nevill dat Domino Regi ducentas Gallinas, eo quod possit jacere una nocte cum Domino suo Hugone de Nevill." Maddox, Hist. Exch. c. xiii. p. 226.

influence which would otherwise have been possessed as in a sort of mortmain and unalienable domain, returned again to the great ocean from whence it arose, and circulated among the people. This method therefore of governing, by men of great natural interest or great acquired consideration, was viewed in a very invidious light by the true lovers of absolute monarchy. It is the nature of despotism to abhor power held by any means but its own momentary pleasure; and to annihilate all intermediate situations between boundless strength on its own part, and total debility on the part of the people.

To get rid of all this intermediate and independent importance, and *to secure to the court the unlimited and uncontrolled use of its own vast influence, under the sole direction of its own private favour*, has for some years past been the great object of policy. If this were compassed, the influence of the crown must of course produce all the effects which the most sanguine partisans of the court could possibly desire. Government might then be carried on without any concurrence on the part of the people; without any attention to the dignity of the greater, or to the affections of the lower sorts. A new project was therefore devised, by a certain set of intriguing men, totally different from the system of administration which had prevailed since the accession of the House of Brunswick. This project, I have heard, was first conceived by some persons in the court of Frederick Prince of Wales.

The earliest attempt in the execution of this design was to set up for minister, a person, in rank indeed respectable, and very ample in fortune; but who, to the moment of this vast and sudden elevation, was little known or considered in the kingdom. To him the whole nation was to yield an immediate and implicit obmission. But whether it was for want of firmness to bear up against the first opposition; or that things were not yet fully ripened, or that this method was not found the most eligible; that idea was soon abandoned. The instrumental part of the project was a little altered, to accommodate it to the time, and to bring things more gradually and more surely to the one great end proposed.

The first part of the reformed plan was to draw *a line which should separate the court from the ministry*. Hitherto these names had been looked upon as synonymous; but for the future, court and administration were to be considered as things totally distinct. By this operation, two systems of administration were to be formed; one which should be in the real secret and confidence; the other merely ostensible to perform the official and executory duties of government. The latter were alone to be responsible; whilst the real advisers, who enjoyed all the power, were effectually removed from all the danger.

Secondly, *A party under these leaders was to be formed in favour of the court against the ministry:* this party was to have a large share in the emoluments of government, and to hold it totally separate from, and independent of, ostensible administration.

The third point, and that on which the success of the whole scheme ultimately depended, was *to bring parliament to an acquiescence in this Project*. Parliament was therefore to be taught by degrees a total indifference to the persons, rank, influence, abilities, connections, and character, of the ministers of the crown. By means of a discipline, on which I shall say more hereafter, that body was to be habituated to the most opposite interests, and the most discordant politics. All connections and dependencies among subjects were to be entirely dissolved. As hitherto business had gone through the hands of Whigs or Tories, men of talents to conciliate the people, and engage to their confidence, now the method was to be altered; and the lead was to be given to men of no sort of consideration or credit in the country. This want of natural importance was to be their very title to delegated power. Members of parliament were to be hardened into an insensibility to pride, as well as to duty. Those high and haughty sentiments, which are the great support of independence, were to be let down gradually. Point of honour and precedence were no more to be regarded in parliamentary decorum, than in a Turkish army. It was to be avowed as a constitutional maxim, that the king might appoint one of his footmen, or one of your footmen, for minister; and that he ought to be, and that he would be, as well followed as the first name for rank or wisdom in the nation. Thus parliament was to look on, as if perfectly unconcerned, while a cabal of the closet and backstairs was substituted in the place of a national administration.

With such a degree of acquiescence, any measure of any court might well be deemed thoroughly secure. The capital objects, and by much the most flattering characteristics of arbitrary power, would be obtained. Every thing would be drawn from its holdings in the country to the personal favour and inclination of the prince. This favour would be the sole introduction to power, and the only tenure by

which it was to be held: so that no person looking towards another, and all looking towards the court, it was impossible but that the motive which solely influenced every man's hopes must come in time to govern every man's conduct: till at last the servility became universal, in spite of the dead letter of any laws or institutions whatsoever.

How it should happen that any man could be tempted to venture upon such a project of government, may at first view appear surprising. But the fact is, that opportunites very inviting to such an attempt have offered; and the scheme itself was not destitute of some arguments not wholly unplausible to recommend it. These opportunities and these arguments, the use that has been made of both, the plan for carrying this new scheme of government into execution, and the effects which it has produced, are in my opinion worthy of our serious consideration.

His majesty came to the throne of these kingdoms with more advantages than any of his predecessors since the revolution. Fourth in descent, and third in succession of his royal family, even the zealots of hereditary right, in him, saw something to flatter their favourite prejudices; and to justify a transfer of their attachments, without a change in their principles. The person and cause of the Pretender were become contemptible; his title disowned throughout Europe, his party disbanded in England. His majesty came indeed to the inheritance of a mighty war; but, victorious in every part of the globe, peace was always in his power, not to negotiate, but to dictate. No foreign habitudes or attachments withdrew him from the cultivation of his power at home. His revenue for the civil establishment, fixed (as it was then thought) at a large, but definite sum, was ample, without being invidious. His influence, by additions from conquest, by an augmentation of debt, by an increase of military and naval establishment, much strengthened and extended. And coming to the throne in the prime and full vigour of youth, as from affection there was a strong dislike, so from dread there seemed to be a general averseness, from giving any thing like offense to a monarch, against whose resentment opposition could not look for a refuge in any sort of reversionary hope.

These singular advantages inspired his majesty only with a more ardent desire to preserve unimpaired the spirit of that national freedom, to which he owed a situation so full of glory. But to others it suggested sentiments of a very different nature. They thought they now beheld an opportunity (by a certain sort of statesmen never long undiscovered or unemployed) of drawing to themselves, by the aggrandizement of a court faction, a degree of power which they could never hope to derive from natural influence or from honourable service; and which it was impossible they could hold with the least security, whilst the system of administration rested upon its former bottom. In order to facilitate the execution of their design, it was necessary to make many alterations in political arrangement, and a signal change in the opinions, habits, and connections of the greatest part of those who at that time acted in public.

In the first place, they proceeded gradually, but not slowly, to destroy every thing of strength which did not derive its principal nourishment from the immediate pleasure of the court. The greatest weight of popular opinion and party connection were then with the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Pitt. Neither of these held their importance by the *new tenure* of the court; they were not therefore thought to be so proper as others for the services which were required by that tenure. It happened very favourably for the new system, that under a forced coalition there rankled an incurable alienation and disgust between the parties which composed the administration. Mr. Pitt was first attacked. Not satisfied with removing him from power, they endeavoured by various artifices to ruin his character. The other party seemed rather pleased to get rid of so oppressive a support; not perceiving, that their own fall was prepared by his, and involved in it. Many other reasons prevented them from daring to look their true situation in the face. To the great Whig families it was extremely disagreeable, and seemed almost unnatural to oppose the administration of a prince of the house of Brunswick. Day after day they hesitated, and doubted, and lingered, expecting that other counsels would take place; and were slow to be persuaded, that all which had been done by the cabal, was the effect, not of humour, but of system. It was more strongly and evidently the interest of the new court faction, to get rid of the great Whig connections, than to destroy Mr. Pitt. The power of that gentleman was vast indeed and merited; but it was in a great degree personal, and therefore transient. Theirs was rooted in the country. For, with a good deal less of popularity, they possessed a far more natural and fixed influence. Long possession of government; vast property; obligations of favours given and received; connection of office; ties of blood, of alliance, of friend-

ship, (things at that time supposed of some force;) the name of Whig, dear to the majority of the people; the zeal early begun and steadily continued to the royal family: all these together formed a body of power in the nation, which was criminal and devoted. The great ruling principle of the cabal, and that which animated and harmonized all their proceedings, how various soever they may have been, was to signify to the world, that the court would proceed upon its own proper forces only; and that the pretence of bringing any other into its service was an affront to it, and not a support. Therefore when the chiefs were removed, in order to go to the root, the whole party was put under a proscription, so general and severe as to take their hard-earned bread from the lowest officers, in a manner which had never been known before, even in general revolutions. But it was thought necessary effectually to destroy all dependencies but one; and to shew an example of the firmness and rigour with which the new system was to be supported.

Thus for the time were pulled down, in the persons of the Whig leaders and of Mr. Pitt (in spite of the services of the one at the accession of the royal family, and the recent services of the other in the war) the *two only securities for the importance of the people; power arising from popularity; and power arising from connection.* Here and there indeed a few individuals were left standing who gave security for their total estrangement from the odious principles of party connection and personal attachment; and it must be confessed that most of them have religiously kept their faith. Such a change could not however be made without a mighty shock to government.

To reconcile the minds of the people to all these movements, principles correspondent to them had been preached up with great zeal. Every one must remember that the cabal set out with the most astonishing prudery, both moral and political. Those who in a few months after soused over head and ears into the deepest and dirtiest pits of corruption, cried out violently against the indirect practices in the electing and managing of parliaments, which had formerly prevailed. This marvellous abhorrence which the court had suddenly taken to all influence, was not only circulated in conversation through the kingdom, but pompously announced to the public, with many other extraordinary things in a pamphlet* which had all the appearance of a manifesto preparatory to some considerable enterprise. Throughout it was a satire, though in terms managed and decent enough, on the politics of the former reign. It was indeed written with no small art and address.

In this piece appeared the first dawning of the new system; there first appeared the idea (then only in speculation) of *separating the court from the administration;* of carrying every thing from national connection to personal regards; and of forming a regular party for that purpose, under the name of *king's men.*

To recommend this system to the people, a perspective view of the court gorgeously painted, and finely illuminated from within, was exhibited to the gaping multitude. Party was to be totally done away, with all its evil works. Corruption was to be cast down from court, as *Até* was from heaven. Power was thenceforward to be the chosen residence of public spirit; and no one was to be supposed under any sinister influence, except those who had the misfortune to be in disgrace at court, which was to stand in lieu of all vices and all corruptions. A scheme of perfection to be realized in a monarchy far beyond the visionary republic of Plato. The whole scenery was exactly disposed to captivate those good souls, whose credulous morality is so invaluable a treasure to crafty politicians. Indeed there was wherewithal to charm every body, except those few who are not much pleased with professions of supernatural virtue, who know of what stuff such professions are made, for what purposes they are designed, and in what they are sure constantly to end. Many innocent gentlemen, who had been talking prose all their lives without knowing any thing of the matter, began at last to open their eyes upon their own merits, and to attribute their not having been lords of the treasury and lords of trade many years before, merely to the prevalence of party, and to the ministerial power, which had frustrated the good intentions of the court in favour of their abilities. Now was the time to unlock the sealed fountain of royal bounty, which had been infamously monopolized and huckstered, and to let it flow at large upon the whole people. The time was come, to restore royalty to its original splendour. *Mettre le Roy hors de page*, became a sort of watch-word. And it was constantly in the mouths of all the runners of the court, that nothing could preserve the balance of the constitution from being overturned by the rabble, or by a faction of the nobility, but to free the sovereign effectually from that ministerial tyranny under which the

* Sentiments of an honest Man

royal dignity had been oppressed in the person of his majesty's grandfather.

These were some of the many artifices used to reconcile the people to the great change which was made in the persons who composed the ministry, and the still greater which was made and avowed in its constitution. As to individuals, other methods were employed with them; in order so thoroughly to disunite every party, and even every family, that *no concert, order, or effect, might appear in any future opposition.* And in this manner an administration without connection with the people, or with one another, was first put in possession of government. What good consequences followed from it, we have all seen; whether with regard to virtue, public or private; to the ease and happiness of the sovereign; or to the real strength of government. But as so much stress was then laid on the necessity of this new project, it will not be amiss to take a view of the effects of this royal servitude and vile durance, which was so deplored in the reign of the late monarch, and was so carefully to be avoided in the reign of his successor. The effects were these.

In times full of doubt and danger to his person and family, George the Second maintained the dignity of his crown connected with the liberty of his people, not only unimpaired, but improved, for the space of thirty-three years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdoms; and thereby destroyed the seeds of all future rebellion that could arise upon the same principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to an height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest prosperity: and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terrour in rival nations. The most ardent lover of his country cannot wish for Great Britain a happier fate than to continue as she was then left. A people emulous as we are in affection to our present sovereign, know not how to form a prayer to heaven for a greater blessing upon his virtues, or a higher state of felicity and glory, than that he should live, and should reign, and, when Providence ordains it, should die, exactly like his illustrious predecessor.

A great prince may be obliged (though such a thing cannot happen very often) to sacrifice his private inclination to his public interest. A wise prince will not think that such a restraint implies a condition of servility; and truly, if such was the condition of the last reign, and the effects were also such as we have described, we ought, no less for the sake of the sovereign whom we love, than for our own, to hear arguments convincing indeed, before we depart from the maxims of that reign, or fly in the face of this great body of strong and recent experience.

One of the principal topics which was then, and has been since, much employed by that political school,* is an effectual terrour of the growth of an aristocratic power, prejudicial to the rights of the crown, and the balance of the constitution. Any new powers exercised in the house of lords, or in the house of commons, or by the crown, ought certainly to excite the vigilant and anxious jealousy of a free people. Even a new and unprecedented course of action in the whole legislature, without great and evident reason, may be a subject of just uneasiness. I will not affirm, that there may not have lately appeared in the house of lords a disposition to some attempts derogatory to the legal rights of the subject. If any such have really appeared, they have arisen, not from a power properly aristocratic, but from the same influence which is charged with having excited attempts of a similar nature in the house of commons; which house, if it should have been betrayed into an unfortunate quarrel with its constituents, and involved in a charge of the very same nature, could have neither power nor inclination to repel such attempts in others. Those attempts in the house of lords can no more be called aristocratic proceedings, than the proceedings with regard to the county of Middlesex in the house of commons can with any sense be called democratical.

It is true, that the peers have a great influence in the kingdom, and in every part of the public concerns. While they are men of property, it is impossible to prevent it, except by such means as must prevent all property from its natural operation: an event not easily to be compassed, while property is power; nor by any means to be wished, while the least notion exists of the method by which the spirit of liberty acts, and of the means by which it is preserved. If any particular peers, by their uniform, upright, constitutional conduct, by their public and their private virtues, have acquired an influence in the country; the people, on whose favour that influence depends, and from whom it arose, will never be duped into an opinion, that such greatness in a peer is the

* See the political writings of the late Dr. Brown, and many others.

despotism of an aristocracy, when they know and feel it to be the effect and pledge of their own importance.

I am no friend to aristocracy, in the sense at least in which that word is usually understood. If it were not a bad habit to moot cases on the supposed ruin of the constitution, I should be free to declare, that if it must perish, I would rather by far see it resolved in any other form, than lost in that austere and insolent domination. But, whatever my dislikes may be, my fears are not upon that quarter. The question, on the influence of a court, and of a peerage, is not, which of the two dangers is the most eligible, but which is the most imminent. He is but a poor observer, who has not seen, that the generality of peers, far from supporting themselves in a state of independent greatness, are but too apt to fall into an oblivion of their proper dignity, and to run headlong into an abject servitude. Would to God it were true, that the fault of our peers were too much spirit! It is worthy of some observation, that these gentlemen, so jealous of aristocracy, make no complaints of the power of those peers (neither few nor inconsiderable) who are always in the train of a court, and whose whole weight must be considered as a portion of the settled influence of the crown. This is all safe and right; but if some peers (I am very sorry they are not as many as they ought to be) set themselves, in the great concern of peers and commons, against a backstairs influence and clandestine government, then the alarm begins; then the constitution is in danger of being forced into an aristocracy.

I rest a little longer on this court topic, because it was much insisted upon at the time of the great change, and has been since frequently revived by many of the agents of that party: for, whilst they are terrifying the great and opulent with the horrours of mob-government, they are by other managers attempting (though hitherto with little success) to alarm the people with a phantom of tyranny in the nobles. All this is done upon their favourite principle of disunion, of sowing jealousies among the different orders of the state, and of disjointing the natural strength of the kingdom; that it may be rendered incapable of resisting the sinister designs of wicked men, who have engrossed the royal power.

Thus much of the topics chosen by the courtiers to recommend their system; it will be necessary to open a little more at large the nature of that party which was formed for its support. Without this, the whole would have been no better than a visionary amusement, like the scheme of Harrington's political club, and not a business in which the nation had a real concern. As a powerful party, and a party constructed on a new principle, it is a very inviting object of curiosity.

It must be remembered, that since the revolution, until the period we are speaking of, the influence of the crown had been always employed in supporting the ministers of state, and in carrying on the public business according to their opinions. But the party now in question is formed upon a very different idea. It is to intercept the favour, protection and confidence of the crown in the passage to its ministers; it is to come between them and their importance in parliament; it is to separate them from all their natural and acquired dependencies; it is intended as the control, not the support, of administration. The machinery of this system is perplexed in its movements, and false in its principle. It is formed on a supposition that the king is something external to his government; and that he may be honoured and aggrandized, even by its debility and disgrace. The plan proceeds expressly on the idea of enfeebling the regular executory power. It proceeds on the idea of weakening the state in order to strengthen the court. The scheme depending entirely on distrust, on disconnection, on mutability by principle, on systematic weakness in every particular member; it is impossible that the total result should be substantial strength of any kind.

As a foundation of their scheme, the cabal have established a sort of *rota* in the court. All sorts of parties, by this means, have been brought into administration, from whence few have had the good fortune to escape without disgrace; none at all without considerable losses. In the beginning of each arrangement no professions of confidence and support are wanting, to induce the leading men to engage. But while the ministers of the day appear in all the pomp and pride of power, while they have all their canvass spread out to the wind, and every sail filled with the fair and prosperous gale of royal favour, in a short time they find, they know not how, a current, which sets directly against them; which prevents all progress; and even drives them backwards. They grow ashamed and mortified in a situation, which, by its vicinity to power, only serves to remind them the more strongly of their insignificance. They are obliged either to execute the orders of their inferiours, or to see themselves opposed by the natural instruments of their office. With the loss of their dignity they lose their temper. In their turn they

grow troublesome to that cabal which, whether it supports or opposes, equally disgraces and equally betrays them. It is soon found necessary to get rid of the heads of administration; but it is of the heads only. As there always are many rotten members belonging to the best connections, it is not hard to persuade several to continue in office without their leaders. By this means the party goes out much thinner than it came in; and is only reduced in strength by its temporary possession of power. Besides, if by accident, or in course of changes, that power should be recovered, the junto have thrown up a retrenchment of these carcasses, which may serve to cover themselves in a day of danger. They conclude, not unwisely, that such rotten members will become the first objects of disgust and resentment to their ancient connections.

They contrive to form in the outward administration two parties at the least; which, whilst they are tearing one another to pieces, are both competitors for the favour and protection of the cabal; and, by their emulation, contribute to throw every thing more and more into the hands of the interiour managers.

A minister of state will sometimes keep himself totally estranged from all his colleagues; will differ from them in their councils, will privately traverse, and publicly oppose, their measures. He will, however, continue in his employment. Instead of suffering any mark of displeasure, he will be distinguished by an unbounded profusion of court rewards and caresses; because he does what is expected, and all that is expected, from men in office. He helps to keep some form of administration in being, and keeps it at the same time as weak and divided as possible.

However, we must take care not to be mistaken, or to imagine that such persons have any weight in their opposition. When, by them, administration is convinced of its insignificancy, they are soon to be convinced of their own. They never are suffered to succeed in their opposition. They and the world are to be satisfied, that, neither office, nor authority, nor property, nor ability, eloquence, counsel, skill, or union, are of the least importance; but that the mere influence of the court, naked of all support, and destitute of all management, is abundantly sufficient for all its own purposes.

When any adverse connection is to be destroyed, the cabal seldom appear in the work themselves. They find out some person of whom the party entertains an high opinion. Such a person they endeavour to delude with various pretences. They teach him first to distrust, and then to quarrel with his friends; among whom, by the same arts, they excite a similar diffidence of him; so that in this mutual fear and distrust, he may suffer himself to be employed as the instrument in the change which is brought about. Afterwards they are sure to destroy him in his turn, by setting up in his place some person in whom he had himself reposed the greatest confidence, and who serves to carry off a considerable part of his adherents.

When such a person has broke in this manner with his connections, he is soon compelled to commit some flagrant act of iniquitous personal hostility against some of them, (such as an attempt to strip a particular friend of his family estate,) by which the cabal hope to render the parties utterly irreconcilable. In truth, they have so contrived matters, that people have a greater hatred to the subordinate instruments than to the principal movers.

As in destroying their enemies they make use of instruments not immediately belonging to their corps, so in advancing their own friends they pursue exactly the same method. To promote any of them to considerable rank or emolument, they commonly take care that the recommendation shall pass through the hands of the ostensible ministry: such a recommendation might however appear to the world, as some proof of the credit of ministers, and some means of increasing their strength. To prevent this, the persons so advanced are directed, in all companies, industriously to declare, that they are under no obligations whatsoever to administration; that they have received their office from another quarter; that they are totally free and independent.

When the faction has any job of lucre to obtain, or of vengeance to perpetrate, their way is, to select, for the execution, those very persons to whose habits, friendships, principles, and declarations, such proceedings are publicly known to be the most adverse; at once to render the instruments the more odious, and therefore the more dependent, and to prevent the people from ever reposing a confidence in any appearance of private friendship, or public principle.

If the administration seem now and then, from remissness, or from fear of making themselves disagreeable, to suffer any popular excesses to go unpunished, the cabal immediately sets up some creature of theirs to raise a clamour against the ministers, as having shamefully betrayed the dignity of government. Then they compel the ministry to become active in conferring rewards and honours on the

persons who have been the instruments of their disgrace; and, after having first vilified them with the higher orders for suffering the laws to sleep over the licentiousness of the populace, they drive them (in order to make amends for their former inactivity) to some act of atrocious violence, which renders them completely abhorred by the people. They who remember the riots which attended the Middlesex election; the opening of the present parliament; and the transactions relative to Saint George's Fields, will not be at a loss for an application of these remarks.

That this body may be enabled to compass all the ends of its institution, its members are scarcely ever to aim at the high and responsible offices of the state. They are distributed with art and judgment through all the secondary, but efficient, departments of office, and through the households of all the branches of the royal family: so as on one hand to occupy all the avenues to the throne; and on the other to forward or frustrate the execution of any measure, according to their own interests. For with the credit and support which they are known to have, though for the greater part in places which are only a genteel excuse for salary, they possess all the influence of the highest post; and they dictate publicly in almost every thing. even with a parade of superiority. Whenever they dissent (as it often happens) from their nominal leaders, the trained part of the senate, instinctively in the secret, is sure to follow them; provided the leaders, sensible of their situation, do not of themselves recede in time from their most declared opinions. This latter is generally the case. It will not be conceivable to any one who has not seen it, what pleasure is taken by the cabal in rendering these heads of office thoroughly contemptible and ridiculous. And when they are become so, they have then the best chance for being well supported.

The members of the court faction are fully indemnified for not holding places on the slippery heights of the kingdom, not only by the lead in all affairs, but also by the perfect security in which they enjoy less conspicuous, but very advantageous situations. Their places are in express legal tenure, or in effect all of them for life. Whilst the first and most respectable persons in the kingdom are tossed about like tennis balls, the sport of a blind and insolent caprice, no minister dares even to cast an oblique glance at the lowest of their body. If an attempt be made upon one of this corps, immediately he flies to sanctuary, and pretends to the most inviolable of all promises. No convenience of public arrangement is available to remove any one of them from the specific situation he holds; and the slightest attempt upon one of them, by the most powerful minister, is a certain preliminary to his own destruction

Conscious of their independence, they bear themselves with a lofty air to the exteriour ministers. Like Janissaries, they derive a kind of freedom from the very condition of their servitude. They may act just as they please; provided they are true to the great ruling principle of their institution. It is, therefore, not at all wonderful, that people should be so desirous of adding themselves to that body, in which they may possess and reconcile satisfactions the most alluring, and seemingly the most contradictory; enjoying at once all the spirited pleasure of independence, and all the gross lucre and fat emoluments of servitude.

Here is a sketch, though a slight one, of the constitution, laws, and policy, of this new court corporation. The name by which they choose to distinguish themselves, is that of *king's men*, or the *king's friends*, by an invidious exclusion of the rest of his Majesty's most loyal and affectionate subjects. The whole system, comprehending the exteriour and interiour administrations, is commonly called in the technical language of the court, *double cabinet;* in French or English as you choose to pronounce it.

Whether all this be a vision of a distracted brain, or the invention of a malicious heart, or a real faction in the country, must be judged by the appearances which things have worn for eight years past. Thus far I am certain, that there is not a single public man, in or out of office, who has not, at some time or other, borne testimony to the truth of what I have now related. In particular, no persons have been more strong in their assertions, and louder and more indecent in their complaints, than those who compose all the exteriour part of the present administration; in whose time that faction has arrived at such an height of power, and of boldness in the use of it, as may, in the end, perhaps bring about its total destruction.

It is true, that about four years ago, during the administration of the Marquis of Rockingham, an attempt was made to carry on government without their concurrence. However, this was only a transient cloud; they were hid but for a moment; and their constellation blazed out with greater brightness, and a far more vigorous influence, some time after it was blown over. An attempt was at that time made (but without any idea of proscription) to break their corps, to discountenance their

doctrines, to revive connections of a different kind, to restore the principles and policy of the Whigs, to reanimate the cause of liberty by ministerial countenance; and then for the first time were men seen attached in office to every principle they had maintained in opposition. No one will doubt, that such men were abhorred and violently opposed by the court faction, and that such a system could have but a short duration.

It may appear somewhat affected, that in so much discourse upon this extraordinary party, I should say so little of the Earl of Bute, who is the supposed head of it. But this was neither owing to affectation nor inadvertence. I have carefully avoided the introduction of personal reflections of any kind. Much the greater part of the topics which have been used to blacken this nobleman, are either unjust or frivolous. At best, they have a tendency to give the resentment of this bitter calamity a wrong direction, and to turn a public grievance into a mean, personal, or a dangerous national quarrel. Where there is a regular scheme of operations carried on, it is the system, and not any individual person who acts in it, that is truly dangerous. This system has not arisen solely from the ambition of Lord Bute, but from the circumstances which favoured it, and from an indifference to the constitution which had been for some time growing among our gentry. We should have been tried with it, if the Earl of Bute had never existed; and it will want neither a contriving head nor active members, when the Earl of Bute exists no longer. It is not, therefore, to rail at Lord Bute, but firmly to embody against this court party and its practices, which can afford us any prospect of relief in our present condition.

Another motive induces me to put the personal consideration of Lord Bute, wholly out of the question. He communicates very little in a direct manner with the greater part of our men of business. This has never been his custom. It is enough for him that he surrounds them with his creatures. Several imagine, therefore, that they have a very good excuse for doing all the work of this faction, when they have no personal connection with Lord Bute. But whoever becomes a party to an administration, composed of insulated individuals, without faith plighted, tie, or common principle; an administration constitutionally impotent, because supported by no party in the nation; he who contributes to destroy the connections of men and their trust in one another, or in any sort to throw the dependence of public counsels upon private will and favour, possibly may have nothing to do with the Earl of Bute. It matters little whether he be the friend or the enemy of that particular person. But let him be who or what he will, he abets a faction that is driving hard to the ruin of his country. He is sapping the foundation of its liberty, disturbing the sources of its domestic tranquillity, weakening its government over its dependencies, degrading it from all its importance in the system of Europe.

It is this unnatural infusion of a *system of favouritism* into a government which in a great part of its constitution is popular, that has raised the present ferment in the nation. The people, without entering deeply into its principles, could plainly perceive its effects, in much violence, in a great spirit of innovation, and a general disorder in all the functions of government. I keep my eye solely on this system; if I speak of those measures which have arisen from it, it will be so far only as they illustrate the general scheme. This is the fountain of all those bitter waters of which, through an hundred different conduits, we have drunk until we are ready to burst. The discretionary power of the crown in the formation of ministry, abused by bad or weak men, has given rise to a system, which, without directly violating the letter of any law, operates against the spirit of the whole constitution.

A plan of favouritism for our executory government is essentially at variance with the plan of our legislature. One great end undoubtedly of a mixed government like ours, composed of monarchy, and of controls, on the part of the higher people and the lower, is, that the prince shall not be able to violate the laws. This is useful indeed and fundamental. But this, even at first view, is no more than a negative advantage; an armour merely defensive. It is therefore next in order, and equal in importance, *that the discretionary powers which are necessarily vested in the monarch, whether for the execution of the laws, or for the nomination to magistracy and office, or for conducting the affairs of peace and war, or for ordering the revenue, should all be exercised upon public principles and national grounds, and not on the likings or prejudices, the intrigues or policies, of a court.* This, I said, is equal in importance to the securing a government according to law. The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the

laws depends upon them. Without them, your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution. It is possible, that through negligence, or ignorance, or design artfully conducted, ministers may suffer one part of government to languish, another to be perverted from its purposes, and every valuable interest of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without possibility of fixing any single act on which a criminal prosecution can be justly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the state, far from being foreign to the purposes of a wise government, ought to be among its very first and dearest objects. When, therefore, the abettors of the new system tell us, that between them and their opposers there is nothing but a struggle for power, and that therefore we are no ways concerned in it; we must tell those who have the impudence to insult us in this manner, that of all things we ought to be the most concerned, who and what sort of men they are, that hold the trust of every thing that is dear to us. Nothing can render this a point of indifference to the nation, but what must either render us totally desperate, or sooth us into the security of ideots. We must soften into a credulity below the milkiness of infancy, to think all men virtuous. We must be tainted with a malignity truly diabolical, to believe all the world to be equally wicked and corrupt. Men are in public life as in private, some good, some evil. The elevation of the one, and the depression of the other, are the first objects of all true policy. But that form of government, which, neither in its direct institutions, nor in their immediate tendency, has contrived to throw its affairs into the most trust-worthy hands, but has left its whole executory system to be disposed of agreeably to the uncontrouled pleasure of any one man, however excellent or virtuous, is a plan of polity defective not only in that member, but consequentially erroneous in every part of it.

In arbitrary governments, the constitution of the ministry follows the constitution of the legislature. Both the law and the magistrate are the creatures of will. It must be so. Nothing, indeed, will appear more certain, on any tolerable consideration of this matter, than that *every sort of government ought to have its administration correspondent to its legislature.* If it should be otherwise, things must fall into an hideous disorder. The people of a free commonwealth, who have taken such care that their laws should be the result of general consent, cannot be so senseless as to suffer their executory system to be composed of persons on whom they have no dependence, and whom no proofs of the public love and confidence have recommended to those powers, upon the use of which the very being of the state depends.

The popular election of magistrates, and popular disposition of rewards and honours, is one of the first advantages of a free state. Without it, or something equivalent to it, perhaps the people cannot long enjoy the substance of freedom; certainly none of the vivifying energy of good government. The frame of our commonwealth did not admit of such an actual election; but it provided as well, and (while the spirit of the constitution is preserved) better for all the effects of it than by the method of suffrage in any democratic state whatsoever. It had always, until of late, been held the first duty of Parliament, *to refuse to support Government, until power was in the hands of persons who were acceptable to the people, or while factions predominated in the Court in which the nation had no confidence.* Thus all the good effects of popular election were supposed to be secured to us, without the mischiefs attending on perpetual intrigue, and a distinct canvass for every particular office throughout the body of the people. This was the most noble and refined part of our constitution. The people, by their representatives and grandees, were intrusted with a deliberative power in making laws; the king with the controul of his negative. The king was intrusted with the deliberative choice and the election to office; the people had the negative in a parliamentary refusal to support. Formerly this power of controul was what kept ministers in awe of parliaments, and parliaments in reverence with the people. If the use of this power of controul on the system and persons of administration is gone, every thing is lost, parliament and all. We may assure ourselves, that if parliament will tamely see evil men take possession of all the strong holds of their country, and allow them time and means to fortify themselves, under a pretence of giving them a fair trial, and upon a hope of discovering, whether they will not be reformed by power, and whether their measures will not be better than their morals; such a parliament will give countenance to their measures also, whatever that parliament may pretend, and whatever those measures may be.

Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment

alone: punishment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain; and which, when power is suffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal.

Before men are put forward into the great trusts of the state, they ought by their conduct to have obtained such a degree of estimation in their country, as may be some sort of pledge and security to the public, that they will not abuse those trusts. It is no mean security for a proper use of power, that a man has shewn by the general tenour of his actions, that the affection, the good opinion, the confidence, of his fellow citizens have been among the principal objects of his life; and that he has owed none of the degradations of his power or fortune to a settled contempt, or occasional forfeiture of their esteem.

That man who before he comes into power has no friends, or who coming into power is obliged to desert his friends, or who losing it has no friends to sympathize with him; he who has no sway among any part of the landed or commercial interest, but whose whole importance has begun with his office, and is sure to end with it; is a person who ought never to be suffered by a controuling parliament to continue in any of those situations which confer the lead and direction of all our public affairs; because such a man *has no connection with the interest of the people.*

Those knots or cabals of men who have got together, avowedly without any public principle, in order to sell their conjunct iniquity at the higher rate, and are therefore universally odious, ought never to be suffered to domineer in the state; because they have *no connection with the sentiments and opinions of the people.*

These are considerations which in my opinion enforce the necessity of having some better reason, in a free country, and a free parliament, for supporting the ministers of the crown, than that short one, *That the king has thought proper to appoint them.* There is something very courtly in this. But it is a principle pregnant with all sorts of mischief, in a constitution like ours, to turn the views of active men from the country to the court. Whatever be the road to power, that is the road which will be trod. If the opinion of the country be of no use as a means of power or consideration, the qualities which usually procure that opinion will be no longer cultivated. And whether it will be right, in a state so popular in its constitution as ours, to leave ambition without popular motives, and to trust all to the operation of pure virtue in the minds of kings and ministers, and public men, must be submitted to the judgment and good sense of the people of England.

Cunning men are here apt to break in, and, without directly controverting the principle, to raise objections from the difficulty under which the sovereign labours, to distinguish the genuine voice and sentiments of his people, from the clamour of a faction, by which it is so easily counterfeited. The nation, they say, is generally divided into parties, with views and passions utterly irreconcilable. If the king should put his affairs into the hands of any one of them, he is sure to disgust the rest; if he select particular men from among them all, it is an hazard that he disgusts them all. Those who are left out, however divided before, will soon run into a body of opposition; which, being a collection of many discontents into one focus, will without doubt be hot and violent enough. Faction will make its cries resound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for a while as it were annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government. Besides that the opinion of the mere vulgar is a miserable rule even with regard to themselves, on account of their violence and instability. So that if you were to gratify them in their humour to-day, that very gratification would be a ground of their dissatisfaction on the next. Now as all these rules of public opinion are to be collected with great difficulty, and to be applied with equal uncertainty as to the effect, what better can a king of England do, than to employ such men as he finds to have views and inclinations most conformable to his own; who are least infected with pride and self-will, and who are least moved by such popular humours as are perpetually traversing his designs, and disturbing his service; trusting that, when he means no ill to his people, he will be supported in his appointments, whether he chooses to keep or to change, as his private judgment or his pleasure leads him? He will find a sure resource in the real weight and influence of the crown, when it is not suffered to become an instrument in the hands of a faction.

I will not pretend to say that there is nothing at all in this mode of reasoning; because I will not assert that there is no difficulty in the art of government. Undoubtedly the very best administration must encounter a great deal of opposition; and the very worst will find more support than it deserves. Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to those who have

a mind to deceive themselves. It is a fallacy in constant use with those who would level all things, and confound right with wrong, to insist upon the inconveniences which are attached to every choice, without taking into consideration the different weight and consequence of those inconveniences. The question is not concerning *absolute* discontent or *perfect* satisfaction in government; neither of which can be pure and unmixed at any time, or upon any system. The controversy is about that degree of good-humour in the people, which may possibly be attained, and ought certainly to be looked for. While some politicians may be waiting to know whether the sense of every individual be against them, accurately distinguishing the vulgar from the better sort, drawing lines between the enterprises of a faction and the efforts of a people, they may chance to see the government, which they are so nicely weighing and dividing, and distinguishing, tumble to the ground in the midst of their wise deliberation. Prudent men, when so great an object as the security of government, or even its peace, is at stake, will not run the risk of a decision which may be fatal to it. They who can read the political sky will see a hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and will run into the first harbour. No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable. Nor will it be impossible for a prince to find out such a mode of government, and such persons to administer it, as will give a great degree of content to his people; without any curious and anxious research for that abstract, universal, perfect harmony, which, while he is seeking, he abandons those means of ordinary tranquillity which are in his power without any research at all.

It is not more the duty than it is the interest of a prince, to aim at giving tranquillity to his government. But those who advise him may have an interest in disorder and confusion. If the opinion of the people is against them, they will naturally wish that it should have no prevalence. Here it is that the people must on their part shew themselves sensible of their own value. Their whole importance, in the first instance, and afterwards their whole freedom, is at stake. Their freedom cannot long survive their importance. Here it is that the natural strength of the kingdom, the great peers, the leading landed gentlemen, the opulent merchants and manufacturors, the substantial yeomanry, must interpose, to rescue their prince, themselves, and their posterity.

We are at present at issue upon this point. We are in the great crisis of this contention; and the part which men take one way or other, will serve to discriminate their characters and their principles. Until the matter is decided, the country will remain in its present confusion. For while a system of administration is attempted, entirely repugnant to the genius of the people, and not conformable to the plan of their government, every thing must necessarily be disordered for a time, until this system destroys the constitution, or the constitution gets the better of this system.

There is in my opinion, a peculiar venom and malignity in this political distemper beyond any that I have heard or read of. In former times the projectors of arbitrary government attacked only the liberties of their country; a design surely mischievous enough to have satisfied a mind of the most unruly ambition. But a system unfavourable to freedom may be so formed, as considerably to exalt the grandeur of the state; and men may find in the pride and splendour of that prosperity some sort of consolation for the loss of their solid privileges. Indeed the increase of the power of the state has often been urged by artful men, as a pretext for some abridgment of the public liberty. But the scheme of the junto under consideration, not only strikes a palsy into every nerve of our free constitution, but in the same degree benumbs and stupifies the whole executive power; rendering government in all its grand operations languid, uncertain, ineffective; making ministers fearful of attempting, and incapable of executing, any useful plan of domestic arrangement, or of foreign politics. It tends to produce neither the security of a free government, nor the energy of a monarchy that is absolute. Accordingly the crown has dwindled away, in proportion to the unnatural and turgid growth of this excrescence on the court.

The interiour ministry are sensible, that war is a situation which sets in its full light the value of the hearts of a people; and they well know, that the beginning of the importance of the people must be the end of theirs. For this reason they discover upon all occasions the utmost fear of every thing, which by possibility may lead to such an event. I do not mean that they manifest any of that pious fear which is backward to commit the safety of the country to the dubious experiment of war. Such a fear, being the tender sensation of virtue, excited, as it is regulated, by reason, frequently shews

itself in a seasonable boldness, which keeps danger at a distance, by seeming to despise it. Their fear betrays to the first glance of the eye, its true cause, and its real object. Foreign powers, confident in the knowledge of their character, have not scrupled to violate the most solemn treaties; and, in defiance of them to make conquests in the midst of a general peace, and in the heart of Europe. Such was the conquest of Corsica, by the professed enemies of the freedom of mankind, in defiance of those who were formerly its professed defenders. We have had just claims upon the same powers: rights which ought to have been sacred to them as well as to us, as they had their origin in our lenity and generosity towards France and Spain in the day of their great humiliation. Such I call the ransom of Manilla, and the demand on France for the East India prisoners. But these powers put a just confidence in their resource of the *double cabinet*. These demands (one of them at least) are hastening fast towards an acquittal by prescription. Oblivion begins to spread her cobwebs over all our spirited remonstrances. Some of the most valuable branches of our trade are also on the point of perishing from the same cause. I do not mean those branches which bear without the hand of the vine-dresser; I mean those which the policy of treaties had formerly secured to us; I mean to mark and distinguish the trade of Portugal, the loss of which, and the power of the cabal, have one and the same æra.

If, by any chance, the ministers who stand before the curtain, possess or affect any spirit, it makes little or no impression. Foreign courts and ministers, who were among the first to discover and to profit by this invention of the *double cabinet*, attend very little to their remonstrances. They know that those shadows of ministers have nothing to do in the ultimate disposal of things. Jealousies and animosities are sedulously nourished in the outward administration, and have been even considered as a *causa sine qua non* in its constitution; thence foreign courts have a certainty, that nothing can be done by common counsel in this nation. If one of those ministers officially takes up a business with spirit, it serves only the better to signalize the meanness of the rest, and the discord of them all. His colleagues in office are in haste to shake him off, and to disclaim the whole of his proceedings. Of this nature was that astonishing transaction, in which Lord Rochford, our ambassador at Paris, remonstrated against the attempt upon Corsica, in consequence of a direct authority from Lord Shelburne. This remonstrance the French minister treated with the contempt that was natural; as he was assured, from the ambassador of his court to ours, that these orders of Lord Shelburne were not supported by the rest of the (I had like to have said British) administration. Lord Rochford, a man of spirit, could not endure this situation. The consequences were, however, curious. He returns from Paris, and comes home full of anger. Lord Shelburne, who gave the orders, is obliged to give up the seals. Lord Rochford, who obeyed these orders, receives them. He goes, however, into another department of the same office, that he might not be obliged officially to acquiesce in one situation under what he had officially remonstrated against in another. At Paris, the Duke of Choiseul considered this office arrangement as a compliment to him: here it was spoken of as an attention to the delicacy of Lord Rochford. But whether the compliment was to one or both, to this nation it was the same. By this transaction the condition of our court lay exposed in all its nakedness. Our office correspondence has lost all pretence to authenticity; British policy is brought into derision in those nations, that a while ago trembled at the power of our arms, whilst they looked up with confidence to the equity, firmness, and candour, which shone in all our negotiations. I represent this matter exactly in the light in which it has been universally received.

Such has been the aspect of our foreign politics, under the influence of a *double cabinet*. With such an arrangement at court, it is impossible it should have been otherwise. Nor is it possible that this scheme should have a better effect upon the government of our dependencies, the first, the dearest, and most delicate objects, of the interiour policy of this empire. The colonies know that administration is separated from the court, divided within itself, and detested by the nation. The *double cabinet* has, on both the parts of it, shewn the most malignant dispositions towards them, without being able to do them the smallest mischief.

They are convinced, by sufficient experience, that no plan, either of lenity or rigour, can be pursued with uniformity and perseverance. Therefore they turn their eyes entirely from Great Britain, where they have neither dependence on friendship, nor apprehension from enmity. They look to themselves, and their own arrangements. They grow every day into alienation from this country; and whilst they are becoming disconnected with our government, we have not the consolation

to find, that they are even friendly in their new independence. Nothing can equal the futility, the weakness, the rashness, the timidity, the perpetual contradiction, in the management of our affairs in that part of the world. A volume might be written on this melancholy subject; but it were better to leave it entirely to the reflections of the reader himself than not to treat it in the extent it deserves.

In what manner our domestic œconomy is affected by this system, it is needless to explain. It is the perpetual subject of their own complaints.

The court party resolve the whole into faction. Having said something before upon this subject, I shall only observe here, that when they give this account of the prevalence of faction, they present no very favourable aspect of the confidence of the people in their own government. They may be assured, that however they amuse themselves with a variety of projects for substituting something else in the place of that great and only foundation of government, the confidence of the people, every attempt will but make their condition worse. When men imagine that their food is only a cover for poison, and when they neither love nor trust the hand that serves it, it is not the name of the roast beef of Old England, that will persuade them to sit down to the table that is spread for them. When the people conceive that laws and tribunals, and even popular assemblies, are perverted from the ends of their institution, they find in those names of degenerated establishments only new motives to discontent. Those bodies, which, when full of life and beauty, lay in their arms, and were their joy and comfort, when dead and putrid, become but the more loathsome from remembrance of former endearments. A sullen gloom and furious disorder, prevail by fits; the nation loses its relish for peace and prosperity, as it did in that season of fulness which opened our troubles in the time of Charles the First. A species of men to whom a state of order would become a sentence of obscurity, are nourished into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of intestine disturbances; and it is no wonder that, by a sort of sinister piety, they cherish in their turn, the disorders which are the parents of all their consequence. Superficial observers consider such persons as the cause of the public uneasiness, when, in truth, they are nothing more than the effect of it. Good men look upon this distracted scene with sorrow and indignation. Their hands are tied behind them. They are despoiled of all the power which might enable them to reconcile the strength of government with the rights of the people. They stand in a most distressing alternative. But in the election among evils they hope better things from temporary confusion, than from established servitude. In the mean time, the voice of law is not to be heard. Fierce licentiousness begets violent restraints. The military arm is the sole reliance; and then, call your constitution what you please, it is the sword that governs. The civil power, like every other that calls in the aid of an ally stronger than itself, perishes by the assistance it receives. But the contrivers of this scheme of government will not trust solely to the military power; because they are cunning men. Their restless and crooked spirit drives them to rake in the dirt of every kind of expedient. Unable to rule the multitude, they endeavour to raise divisions among them. One mob is hired to destroy another; a procedure which at once encourages the boldness of the populace, and justly increases their discontent. Men become pensioners of state on account of their abilities in the array of riot, and the discipline of confusion. Government is put under the disgraceful necessity of protecting from the severity of the laws that very licentiousness, which the laws had been before violated to repress. Every thing partakes of the original disorder. Anarchy predominates without freedom, and servitude without submission or subordination. These are the consequences inevitable to our public peace, from the scheme of rendering the executory government at once odious and feeble; of freeing administration from the constitutional and salutary controul of parliament, and inventing for it a *new controul*, unknown to the constitution, an *interiour cabinet*; which brings the whole body of government into confusion and contempt.

After having stated, as shortly as I am able, the effects of this system on our foreign affairs, on the policy of our government with regard to our dependencies, and on the interiour œconomy of the commonwealth; there remains only, in this part of my design, to say something of the grand principle which first recommended this system at court. The pretence was, to prevent the king from being enslaved by a faction, and made a prisoner in his closet. This scheme might have been expected to answer, at least its own end, and to indemnify the king, in his personal capacity, for all the confusion into which it has thrown his government. But has it in reality answered this purpose? I am sure, if it had, every affectionate subject would have one motive for enduring with patience all the evils which attend it.

In order to come at the truth in this matter, it may not be amiss to consider it somewhat in detail. I speak here of the king, and not of the crown; the interests of which we have already touched. Independent of that greatness which a king possesses merely by being a representative of the national dignity, the things in which he may have an individual interest seem to be these;—wealth accumulated; wealth spent in magnificence, pleasure, or beneficence; personal respect and attention; and above all, private ease and repose of mind. These compose the inventory of prosperous circumstances, whether they regard a prince or a subject; their enjoyments differing only in the scale upon which they are formed.

Suppose then we were to ask, whether the king has been richer than his predecessors in accumulated wealth, since the establishment of the plan of favouritism? I believe it will be found that the picture of royal indigence which our court has presented until this year, has been truly humiliating. Nor has it been relieved from this unseemly distress, but by means which have hazarded the affection of the people, and shaken their confidence in parliament. If the public treasures had been exhausted in magnificence and splendour, this distress would have been accounted for, and in some measure justified. Nothing would be more unworthy of this nation, than with a mean and mechanical rule, to mete out the splendour of the crown. Indeed I have found very few persons disposed to so ungenerous a procedure. But the generality of people, it must be confessed, do feel a good deal mortified, when they compare the wants of the court with its expenses. They do not behold the cause of this distress in any part of the apparatus of royal magnificence. In all this, they see nothing but the operations of parsimony, attended with all the consequences of profusion. Nothing expended, nothing saved. Their wonder is increased by their knowledge, that besides the revenue settled on his majesty's civil list to the amount of £.800,000 a year, he has a farther aid, from a large pension list, near £.90,000 a year, in Ireland; from the produce of the dutchy of Lancaster, (which we are told has been greatly improved;) from the revenue of the dutchy of Cornwall; from the American quit-rents; from the four and a half *per cent.* duty in the Leeward Islands; this last worth to be sure considerably more than £.40,000 a year. The whole is certainly not much short of a million annually.

These are revenues within the knowledge and cognizance of our national councils. We have no direct right to examine into the receipts from his majesty's German dominions, and the bishopric of Osnaburg. This is unquestionably true. But that which is not within the province of parliament, is yet within the sphere of every man's own reflection. If a foreign prince resided among us, the state of his revenues could not fail of becoming the subject of our speculation. Filled with an anxious concern for whatever regards the welfare of our sovereign, it is impossible, in considering the miserable circumstances into which he has been brought, that this obvious topic should be entirely passed over. There is an opinion universal, that these revenues produce something not inconsiderable, clear of all charges and establishments. This produce the people do not believe to be hoarded, nor perceive to be spent. It is accounted for in the only manner it can, by supposing that it is drawn away, for the support of that court faction, which, whilst it distresses the nation, impoverishes the prince in every one of his resources. I once more caution the reader, that I do not urge this consideration concerning the foreign revenue, as if I supposed we had a direct right to examine into the expenditure of any part of it; but solely for the purpose of shewing how little this system of favouritism has been advantageous to the monarch himself; which, without magnificence, has sunk him into a state of unnatural poverty; at the same time that he possessed every means of affluence, from ample revenues, both in this country, and in other parts of his dominions.

Has this system provided better for the treatment becoming his high and sacred character and secured the king from those disgusts attached to the necessity of employing men who are not personally agreeable? This is a topic upon which for many reasons I could wish to be silent; but the pretence of securing against such causes of uneasiness, is the corner-stone of the court party. It has however so happened, that if I were to fix upon any one point, in which this system has been more particularly and shamefully blameable, the effects which it has produced would justify me in choosing for that point its tendency to degrade the personal dignity of the sovereign, and to expose him to a thousand contradictions and mortifications. It is but too evident in what manner these projectors of royal greatness have fulfilled all their magnificent promises. Without recapitulating all the circumstances of the reign, every one of which is more or less a melancholy proof of the truth of what I have advanced, let us consider the language of the court but a few years ago, concerning most of

the persons now in the external administration: let me ask, whether any enemy to the personal feelings of the sovereign, could possibly contrive a keener instrument of mortification, and degradation of all dignity, than almost every part and member of the present arrangement? nor, in the whole course of our history, has any compliance with the will of the people ever been known to extort from any prince a greater contradiction to all his own declared affections and dislikes than that which is now adopted, in direct opposition to every thing the people approve and desire.

An opinion prevails, that greatness has been more than once advised to submit to certain condescensions towards individuals, which have been denied to the entreaties of a nation. For the meanest and most dependent instrument of this system knows, that there are hours when its existence may depend upon his adherence to it; and he takes his advantage accordingly. Indeed it is a law of nature, that whoever is necessary to what we have made our object, is sure in some way, or in some time or other, to become our master. All this however is submitted to, in order to avoid that monstrous evil of governing in concurrence with the opinion of the people. For it seems to be laid down as a maxim, that a king has some sort of interest in giving uneasiness to his subjects: that all who are pleasing to them, are to be of course disagreeable to him: that as soon as the persons who are odious at court are known to be odious to the people, it is snatched at as a lucky occasion of showering down upon them all kinds of emoluments and honours. None are considered as well-wishers to the crown, but those who advise to some unpopular course of action; none capable of serving it, but those who are obliged to call at every instant upon all its power for the safety of their lives. None are supposed to be fit priests in the temple of government, but the persons who are compelled to fly into it for sanctuary. Such is the effect of this refined project; such is ever the result of all the contrivances which are used to free men from the servitude of their reason, and from the necessity of ordering their affairs according to their evident interests. These contrivances oblige them to run into a real and ruinous servitude, in order to avoid a supposed restraint that might be attended with advantage.

If therefore this system has so ill answered its own grand pretence of saving the king from the necessity of employing persons disagreeable to him, has it given more peace and tranquillity to his majesty's private hours? No, most certainly. The father of his people cannot possibly enjoy repose, while his family is in such a state of distraction. Then what has the crown or the king profited by all this fine-wrought scheme? Is he more rich, or more splendid, or more powerful, or more at his ease, by so many labours and contrivances? have they not beggared his exchequer, tarnished the splendour of his court, sunk his dignity, galled his feelings, discomposed the whole order and happiness of his private life?

It will be very hard, I believe, to state in what respect the king has profited by that faction which presumptuously choose to call themselves *his friends*.

If particular men had grown into an attachment, by the distinguished honour of the society of their sovereign; and, by being the partakers of his amusements, came sometimes to prefer the gratification of his personal inclinations to the support of his high character, the thing would be very natural, and it would be excusable enough. But the pleasant part of the story is, that these *king's friends* have no more ground for usurping such a title, than a resident freeholder in Cumberland or in Cornwall. They are only known to their sovereign by kissing his hand, for the offices, pensions, and grants, into which they have deceived his benignity. May no storm ever come, which will put the firmness of their attachment to the proof; and which, in the midst of confusions, and terrours, and sufferings, may demonstrate the eternal difference between a true and severe friend to the monarchy, and a slippery sycophant of the court! *Quantum infido scurra distabit amicus.*

So far I have considered the effect of the court system, chiefly as it operates upon the executive government, on the temper of the people, and on the happiness of the sovereign. It remains, that we should consider, with a little attention, its operation upon parliament.

Parliament was indeed the great object of all these politics, the end at which they aimed, as well as the instrument by which they were to operate. But, before parliament could be made subservient to a system, by which it was to be degraded from the dignity of a national council, into a mere member of the court, it must be greatly changed from its original character.

In speaking of this body, I have my eye chiefly on the house of commons. I hope I shall be indulged in a few observations on the nature and character of that assembly; not with regard to its *legal form and power*, but to its *spirit*, and to the purposes it is meant to answer in the constitution.

The house of commons was supposed originally to be *no part of the standing government of this country*. It was considered as a *control*, issuing *immediately* from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect it was in the higher part of government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magistrate being transitory, and that of a citizen permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of course preponderate in all discussions, not only between the people and the standing authority of the crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the house of commons itself. It was hoped that, being of a middle nature between subject and government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer interest every thing that concerned the people, than the other remoter and more permanent parts of legislature.

Whatever alterations time and the necessary accommodation of business may have introduced, this character can never be sustained, unless the house of commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large. It would (among public misfortunes) be an evil more natural and tolerable, that the house of commons should be infected with every epidemical phrenzy of the people, as this would indicate some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature with their constituents, than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of sympathy they would cease to be a house of commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that house from the people, which makes it in a distinct sense their representative. The king is the representative of the people; so are the lords; so are the judges. They all are trustees for the people, as well as the commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder; and although government certainly is an institution of divine authority, yet it forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteristical distinction of a popular representative. This belongs equally to all parts of government, and in all forms. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a house of commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a controul *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a controul *for* the people. Other institutions have been formed for the purpose of checking popular excesses; and they are, I apprehend, fully adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made so. The house of commons, as it was never intended for the support of peace and subordination, is miserably appointed for that service; having no stronger weapon than its mace, and no better officer than its serjeant at arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy; an anxious care of public money, an openness, approaching towards facility, to public complaint: these seem to be the true characteristics of a house of commons. But an addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation; a house of commons full of confidence, when the nation is plunged in despair; in the utmost harmony with ministers, whom the people regard with the utmost abhorrence; who vote thanks, when the public opinion calls upon them for impeachments; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account; who, in all disputes between the people and administration, presume against the people; who punish their disorders, but refuse even to inquire into the provocations to them; this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful senate; but it is not to any popular purpose a house of commons. This change from an immediate state of procuration and delegation to a course of acting as from original power, is the way in which all the popular magistracies in the world have been perverted from their purposes. It is indeed their greatest and sometimes their incurable corruption. For there is a material distinction between that corruption by which particular points are carried against reason, (this is a thing which cannot be prevented by human wisdom, and is of less consequence,) and the corruption of the principle itself. For then the evil is not accidental, but settled. The distemper becomes the natural habit.

For my part, I shall be compelled to conclude the principle of parliament to be totally corrupted, and therefore its ends entirely defeated, when I see two symptoms; first, a rule of indiscriminate support to all ministers; because this destroys the very end of parliament as a controul, and is a general previous sanction to misgovernment; and secondly, the setting up any claims adverse to the right of free election; for this tends to subvert the legal authority by which the house of commons sits.

I know that, since the Revolution, along with many dangerous, many useful powers of government have been weakened. It is abso-

lately necessary to have frequent recourse to the legislature. Parliaments must therefore sit every year, and for great part of the year. The dreadful disorders of frequent elections have also necessitated a septennial instead of a triennial duration. These circumstances, I mean the constant habit of authority, and the infrequency of elections, have tended very much to draw the house of commons towards the character of a standing senate. It is a disorder which has arisen from the cure of greater disorders; it has arisen from the extreme difficulty of reconciling liberty under a monarchical government, with external strength and with internal tranquillity.

It is very clear that we cannot free ourselves entirely from this great inconvenience; but I would not increase an evil, because I was not able to remove it; and because it was not in my power to keep the house of commons religiously true to its first principles, I would not argue for carrying it to a total oblivion of them. This has been the great scheme of power in our time. They who will not conform their conduct to the public good, and cannot support it by the prerogative of the crown, have adopted a new plan. They have totally abandoned the shattered and old fashioned fortress of prerogative, and made a lodgment in the strong hold of parliament itself. If they have any evil design to which there is no ordinary legal power commensurate, they bring it into parliament. In parliament the whole is executed from the beginning to the end. In parliament the power of obtaining their object is absolute; and the safety in the proceeding perfect; no rules to confine, no after-reckonings to terrify. Parliament cannot with any great propriety punish others, for things in which they themselves have been accomplices. Thus the controul of parliament upon the executory power is lost; because parliament is made to partake in every considerable act of government. *Impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the constitution, is in danger of being lost, even to the idea of it.*

By this plan several important ends are answered to the cabal. If the authority of parliament supports itself, the credit of every act of government which they contrive, is saved; but if the act be so very odious that the whole strength of parliament is insufficient to recommend it, then parliament is itself discredited; and this discredit increases more and more that indifference to the constitution, which it is the constant aim of its enemies, by their abuse of parliamentary powers, to render general among the people. Whenever parliament is persuaded to assume the offices of executive government, it will lose all the confidence, love, and veneration, which it has ever enjoyed whilst it was supposed the *corrective and controul* of the acting powers of the state. This would be the event, though its conduct in such a perversion of its functions should be tolerably just and moderate; but if it should be iniquitous, violent, full of passion, and full of faction, it would be considered as the most intolerable of all the modes of tyranny.

For a considerable time this separation of the representatives from their constituents went on with a silent progress; and had those, who conducted the plan for their total separation, been persons of temper and abilities any way equal to the magnitude of their design, the success would have been infallible: but by their precipitancy they have laid it open in all its nakedness, the nation is alarmed at it: and the event may not be pleasant to the contrivers of the scheme. In the last session, the corps called the *king's friends* made an hardy attempt all at once, *to alter the right of election itself*, to put it into the power of the house of commons to disable any person disagreeable to them from sitting in parliament, without any other rule than their own pleasure; to make incapacities, either general for descriptions of men, or particular for individuals; and to take into their body, persons who avowedly had never been chosen by the majority of legal electors, nor agreeably to any known rule of law.

The arguments upon which this claim was founded and combated, are not my business here. Never has a subject been more amply and more learnedly handled, nor upon one side in my opinion more satisfactorily; they who are not convinced by what is already written would not receive conviction *though one arose from the dead.*

I too have thought on this subject: but my purpose here, is only to consider it as a part of the favourite project of government; to observe on the motives which led to it; and to trace its political consequences.

A violent rage for the punishment of Mr. Wilkes was the pretence of the whole. This gentleman, by setting himself strongly in opposition to the court cabal, had become at once an object of their persecution, and of the popular favour. The hatred of the court party pursuing, and the countenance of the people protecting him, it very soon became not at all a question on the man, but a trial of strength between the two parties. The advantage of the victory in this particular contest was the

present, but not the only, nor by any means the principal, object. Its operation upon the character of the house of commons was the great point in view. The point to be gained by the cabal was this; that a precedent should be established, tending to shew, *That the favour of the people was not so sure a road as the favour of the court even to popular honours and popular trusts.* A strenuous resistance to every appearance of lawless power; a spirit of independence carried to some degree of enthusiasm; an inquisitive character to discover, and a bold one to display, every corruption and every errour of government; these are the qualities which recommend a man to a seat in the house of commons, in open and merely popular elections. An indolent and submissive disposition; a disposition to think charitably of all the actions of men in power, and to live in a mutual intercourse of favours with them; an inclination rather to countenance a strong use of authority, than to bear any sort of licentiousness on the part of the people; these are unfavourable qualities in an open election for members of parliament.

The instinct which carries the people towards the choice of the former, is justified by reason; because a man of such a character, even in its exorbitances, does not directly contradict the purposes of a trust, the end of which is a controul on power. The latter character, even when it is not in its extreme, will execute this trust but very imperfectly; and, if deviating to the least excess, will certainly frustrate instead of forwarding the purposes of a controul on government. But when the house of commons was to be new modelled, this principle was not only to be changed but reversed. Whilst any errours committed in support of power were left to the law, with every advantage of favourable construction, of mitigation, and finally of pardon; all excesses on the side of liberty, or in pursuit of popular favour, or in defence of popular rights and privileges, were not only to be punished by the rigour of the known law, but by a *discretionary* proceeding which brought on *the loss of the popular object itself.* Popularity was to be rendered, if not directly penal, at least highly dangerous. The favour of the people might lead even to a disqualification of representing them. Their odium might become, strained through the medium of two or three constructions, the means of sitting as the trustee of all that was dear to them. This is punishing the offence in the offending part. Until this time, the opinion of the people, through the power of an assembly, still in some sort popular, led to the greatest honours and emoluments in the gift of the crown. Now the principle is reversed; and the favour of the court is the only sure way of obtaining and holding those honours which ought to be in the disposal of the people.

It signifies very little how this matter may be quibbled away. Example, the only argument of effect in civil life, demonstrates the truth of my proposition. Nothing can alter my opinion concerning the pernicious tendency of this example, until I see some man for his indiscretion in the support of power, for his violent and intemperate servility, rendered incapable of sitting in parliament. For as it now stands, the fault of overstraining popular qualities, and, irregularly if you please, asserting popular privileges, has led to disqualification; the opposite fault never has produced the slightest punishment. Resistance to power, has shut the door of the house of commons to one man; obsequiousness and servility, to none.

Not that I would encourage popular disorder, or any disorder. But I would leave such offences to the law, to be punished in measure and proportion. The laws of this country are for the most part constituted, and wisely so, for the general ends of government, rather than for the preservation of our particular liberties. Whatever therefore is done in support of liberty, by persons not in public trust, or not acting merely in that trust, is liable to be more or less out of the ordinary course of the law; and the law itself is sufficient to animadvert upon it with great severity. Nothing indeed can hinder that severe letter from crushing us, except the temperaments it may receive from a trial by jury. But if the habit prevails of *going beyond the law*, and superseding this judicature, of carrying offences, real or supposed, into the legislative bodies, who shall establish themselves into *courts of criminal equity*, (so the *star chamber* has been called by Lord Bacon,) all the evils of the *star chamber* are revived. A large and liberal construction in ascertaining offences, and a discretionary power in punishing them, is the idea of *criminal equity*; which is in truth a monster in jurisprudence. It signifies nothing whether a court for this purpose be a committee of council or a house of commons, or a house of lords; the liberty of the subject will be equally subverted by it. The true end and purpose of that house of parliament which entertains such a jurisdiction will be destroyed by it.

I will not believe, what no other man living believes, that Mr. Wilkes was punished for the indecency of his publications, or the impiety of

his ransacked closet. If he had fallen in a common slaughter of libellers and blasphemers, I could well believe that nothing more was meant than was pretended. But when I see that, for years together, full as impious, and perhaps more dangerous writings to religion and virtue and order, have not been punished, nor their authors discountenanced; that the most audacious libels on royal majesty have passed without notice; that the most treasonable invectives against the laws, liberties, and constitution of the country, have not met with the slightest animadversion; I must consider this as a shocking and shameless pretence. Never did an envenomed scurrility against every thing sacred and civil, public and private, rage through the kingdom with such a furious and unbridled licence. All this while the peace of the nation must be shaken, to ruin one libeller, and to tear from the populace a single favourite.

Nor is it that vice merely skulks in an obscure and contemptible impunity. Does not the public behold with indignation, persons not only generally scandalous in their lives, but the identical persons who, by their society, their instruction, their example, their encouragement, have drawn this man into the very faults which have furnished the cabal with a pretence for his persecution, loaded with every kind of favour, honour, and distinction, which a court can bestow? Add but the crime of servility (*the fadam crimen servitutis*) to every other crime, and the whole mass is immediately transmuted into virtue, and becomes the just subject of reward and honour. When therefore I reflect upon this method pursued by the cabal in distributing rewards and punishments, I must conclude that Mr. Wilkes is the object of persecution, not on account of what he has done in common with others who are the objects of reward, but for that in which he differs from many of them: that he is pursued for the spirited dispositions which are blended with his vices; for his unconquerable firmness, for his resolute, indefatigable, strenuous resistance against oppression.

In this case, therefore, it was not the man that was to be punished, nor his faults that were to be discountenanced. Opposition to acts of power was to be marked by a kind of civil proscription. The popularity which should arise from such an opposition was to be shewn unable to protect it. The qualities by which court is made to the people, were to render every fault inexpiable, and every errour irretrievable. The qualities by which court is made to power, were to cover and to sanctify every thing. He that will have a sure and honourable seat in the house of commons, must take care how he adventures to cultivate popular qualities; otherwise he may remember the old maxim, *Breves et infaustos populi Romani amores*. If, therefore, a pursuit of popularity expose a man to greater dangers than a disposition to servility, the principle which is the life and soul of popular elections will perish out of the constitution.

It behoves the people of England to consider how the house of commons, under the operation of these examples, must of necessity be constituted. On the side of the court will be, all honours, offices, emoluments; every sort of personal gratification to avarice or vanity; and what is of more moment to most gentlemen, the means of growing, by innumerable petty services to individuals, into a spreading interest in their country. On the other hand, let us suppose a person unconnected with the court, and in opposition to its system. For his own person, no office, or emolument, or title; no promotion ecclesiastical or civil, or military, or naval, for children, or brothers, or kindred. In vain an expiring interest in a borough calls for offices, or small livings, for the children of mayors, and aldermen, and capital burgesses. His court rival has them all. He can do an infinite number of acts of generosity and kindness, and even of public spirit. He can procure indemnity from quarters. He can procure advantages in trade. He can get pardons for offences. He can obtain a thousand favours, and avert a thousand evils. He may, while he betrays every valuable interest of the kingdom, be a benefactor, a patron, a father, a guardian angel, to his borough. The unfortunate independent member has nothing to offer, but harsh refusal, or pitiful excuse, or despondent representation of an hopeless interest. Except from his private fortune, in which he may be equalled, perhaps exceeded, by his court competitor, he has no way of shewing any one good quality, or of making a single friend. In the house, he votes for ever in a dispirited minority. If he speaks, the doors are locked. A body of loquacious place-men go out to tell the world that all he aims at is to get into office. If he has not the talent of elocution, which is the case of many as wise and knowing men as any in the house, he is liable to all these inconveniences, without the eclat which attends upon any tolerably successful exertion of eloquence. Can we conceive a more discouraging post of duty than this? Strip it of the poor reward of popularity; suffer even the excesses committed in defence of the popular interest, to become a

ground for the majority of that house to form a disqualification out of the line of the law, and at their pleasure, attended not only with the loss of the franchise, but with every kind of personal disgrace.—If this shall happen, the people of this kingdom may be assured that they cannot be firmly or faithfully served by any man. It is out of the nature of men and things that they should; and their presumption will be equal to their folly if they expect it. The power of the people, within the laws, must shew itself sufficient to protect every representative in the animated performance of his duty, or that duty cannot be performed. The house of commons can never be a controul on other parts of government, unless they are controuled themselves by their constituents; and unless these constituents possess some right in the choice of that house, which it is not in the power of that house to take away. If they suffer this power of arbitrary incapacitation to stand, they have utterly perverted every other power of the house of commons. The late proceeding, I will not say, *is* contrary to law; it *must* be so; for the power which is claimed cannot, by any possibility, be a legal power in any limited member of government.

The power which they claim, of declaring incapacities, would not be above the just claims of a final judicature, if they had not laid it down as a leading principle, that they had no rule in the exercise of this claim, but their own *discretion*. Not one of their abettors has ever undertaken to assign the principle of unfitness, the species or degree of delinquency, on which the house of commons will expel, nor the mode of proceeding upon it, nor the evidence upon which it is established. The direct consequence of which is, that the first franchise of an Englishman, and that on which all the rest vitally depend, is to be forfeited for some offence which no man knows, and which is to be proved by no known rule whatsoever of legal evidence. This is so anomalous to our whole constitution, that I will venture to say, the most trivial right which the subject claims, never was, nor can be, forfeited in such a manner.

The whole of their usurpation is established upon this method of arguing. We do not *make* laws. No; we do not contend for this power. We only *declare* law; and, as we are a tribunal both competent and supreme, what we declare to be law becomes law, although it should not have been so before. Thus the circumstance of having no *appeal* from their jurisdiction is made to imply that they have no *rule* in the exercise of it; the judgment does not derive its validity from its conformity to the law; but preposterously the law is made to attend on the judgment; and the rule of the judgment is no other than the *occasional will of the house*. An arbitrary discretion leads, legality follows; which is just the very nature and description of a legislative act.

This claim in their hands was no barren theory. It was pursued into its utmost consequences; and a dangerous principle has begot a correspondent practice. A systematic spirit has been shewn upon both sides. The electors of Middlesex chose a person whom the house of commons had voted incapable; and the house of commons has taken in a member whom the electors of Middlesex had not chosen. By a construction on that legislative power which had been assumed, they declared that the true legal sense of the country was contained in the minority, on that occasion; and might, on a resistance to a vote of incapacity, be contained in any minority.

When any construction of law goes against the spirit of the privilege it was meant to support, it is a vicious construction. It is material to us to be represented really and *bona fide*, and not in forms, in types, and shadows, and fictions of law. The right of election was not established merely as a *matter of form*, to satisfy some method and rule of technical reasoning; it was not a principle which might substitute a *Titius*, or a *Mævius*, a *John Doe* or *Richard Roe*, in the place of a man specially chosen; not a principle which was just as well satisfied with one man as with another. It is a right, the effect of which is to give to the people, that man, and *that man only*, whom by their voices, actually, not constructively given, they declare that they know, esteem, love, and trust. This right is a matter within their own power of judging and feeling; not an *ens rationis* and creature of law: nor can those devices, by which any thing else is substituted in the place of such an actual choice, answer in the least degree the end of representation.

I know that the courts of law have made as strained constructions in other cases. Such is the construction in common recoveries. The method of construction which in that case gives to the persons in remainder, for their security and representative, the door-keeper, cryer, or sweeper of the court, or some other shadowy being without substance or effect, is a fiction of a very coarse texture. This was however suffered, by the acquiescence of the whole kingdom, for ages, because the evasion of the old statute of Westminster, which authorized perpetuities, had more sense and utility than the law which was evaded. But an attempt to

turn the right of election into such a farce and mockery as a fictitious fine and recovery, will, I hope, have another fate; because the laws which give it are infinitely dear to us, and the evasion is infinitely contemptible.

The people indeed have been told, that this power of discretionary disqualification is vested in hands that they may trust, and who will be sure not to abuse it to their prejudice. Until I find something in this argument differing from that on which every mode of despotism has been defended, I shall not be inclined to pay it any great compliment. The people are satisfied to trust themselves with the exercise of their own privileges, and do not desire this kind intervention of the house of commons to free them from the burthen. They are certainly in the right. They ought not to trust the house of commons with a power over their franchises: because the constitution, which placed two other co-ordinate powers to controul it, reposed no such confidence in that body. It were a folly well deserving servitude for its punishment, to be full of confidence where the laws are full of distrust; and to give to a house of commons, arrogating to its sole resolution the most harsh and odious part of legislative authority, that degree of submission which is due only to the legislature itself.

When the house of commons, in an endeavour to obtain new advantages at the expense of the other orders of the state, for the benefit of the *commons at large*, have pursued strong measures; if it were not just, it was at least natural, that the constituents should connive at all their proceedings; because we were ourselves ultimately to profit. But when this submission is urged to us, in a contest between the representatives and ourselves, and where nothing can be put into their scale which is not taken from ours, they fancy us to be children when they tell us they are our representatives, our own flesh and blood, and that all the stripes they give us are for our good. The very desire of that body to have such a trust contrary to law reposed in them, shews that they are not worthy of it. They certainly will abuse it; because all men possessed of an uncontrouled discretionary power leading to the aggrandizement and profit of their own body have always abused it: and I see no particular sanctity in our times, that is at all likely, by a miraculous operation, to overrule the course of nature.

But we must purposely shut our eyes, if we consider this matter merely as a contest between the house of commons and the electors. The true contest is between the electors of the kingdom and the crown; the crown acting by an instrumental house of commons. It is precisely the same, whether the ministers of the crown can disqualify by a dependent house of commons, or by a dependent court of *star chamber*, or by a dependent court of king's bench. If once members of parliament can be practically convinced that they do not depend on the affection or opinion of the people for their political being, they will give themselves over, without even an appearance of reserve, to the influence of the court.

Indeed, a parliament unconnected with the people, is essential to a ministry unconnected with the people; and therefore those who saw through what mighty difficulties the interiour ministry waded, and the exteriour were dragged, in this business, will conceive of what prodigious importance, the new corps of *king's men* held this principle of occasional and personal incapacitation, to the whole body of their design.

When the house of commons was thus made to consider itself as the master of its constituents, there wanted but one thing to secure that house against all possible future deviation towards popularity; an *unlimited* fund of money to be laid out according to the pleasure of the court.

To complete the scheme of bringing our court to a resemblance to the neighbouring monarchies, it was necessary, in effect, to destroy those appropriations of revenue, which seemed to limit the property, as the other laws had done the powers, of the crown. An opportunity for this purpose was taken, upon an application to parliament for payment of the debts of the civil list; which in 1769 had amounted to £.513,000. Such application had been made upon former occasions; but to do it in the former manner would by no means answer the present purpose.

Whenever the crown had come to the commons to desire a supply for the discharging of debts due on the civil list; it was always asked and granted with one of the three following qualifications; sometimes with all of them. Either it was stated, that the revenue had been diverted from its purposes by parliament; or that those duties had fallen short of the sum for which they were given by parliament, and that the intention of the legislature had not been fulfilled; or that the money required to discharge the civil list debt, was to be raised chargeable on the civil list duties. In the reign of Queen Anne, the crown was found in debt. The lessening and granting away some part of her revenue by parliament was alleged as the cause of that debt, and pleaded as an equitable ground, such it certainly was, for discharging

it. It does not appear that the duties which were then applied to the ordinary government produced clear above £.580,000 a year; because, when they were afterwards granted to George the First, £.120,000 was added, to complete the whole to £.700,000 a year. Indeed it was then asserted, and, I have no doubt, truly, that for many years the net produce did not amount to above £.550,000. The Queen's extraordinary charges were besides very considerable; equal, at least, to any we have known in our time. The application to parliament was not for an absolute grant of money; but to empower the Queen to raise it by borrowing upon the civil list funds.

The civil list debt was twice paid in the reign of George the First. The money was granted upon the same plan which had been followed in the reign of Queen Anne. The civil list revenues were then mortgaged for the sum to be raised, and stood charged with the ransom of their own deliverance.

George the Second received an addition to his civil list. Duties were granted for the purpose of raising £.800,000 a year. It was not until he had reigned nineteen years, and after the last rebellion, that he called upon parliament for a discharge of the civil list debt. The extraordinary charges brought on by the rebellion, account fully for the necessities of the crown. However, the extraordinary charges of government were not thought a ground fit to be relied on.

A deficiency of the civil list duties for several years before, was stated as the principal, if not the sole, ground on which an application to parliament could be justified. About this time the produce of these duties had fallen pretty low; and even upon an average of the whole reign they never produced £.800,000 a year clear to the treasury.

That prince reigned fourteen years afterwards: not only no new demands were made; but with so much good order were his revenues and expenses regulated, that, although many parts of the establishment of the court were upon a larger and more liberal scale than they have been since, there was a considerable sum in hand, on his disease, amounting to about £.170,000 applicable to the service of the civil list of his present majesty. So that, if this reign commenced with a greater charge than usual, there was enough, and more than enough, abundantly to supply all the extraordinary expense. That the civil list should have been exceeded in the two former reigns, especially in the reign of George the First was not at all surprising. His revenue was but £.700,000, annually; if it ever produced so much clear The prodigious and dangerous disaffection to the very being of the establishment, and the cause of a pretender then powerfully abetted from abroad, produced many demands of an extraordinary nature both abroad and at home. Much management and great expenses were necessary. But the throne of no prince has stood upon more unshaken foundations than that of his present majesty.

To have exceeded the sum given for the civil list, and to have incurred a debt without special authority of parliament, was, *prima facie*, a criminal act: as such, ministers ought naturally rather to have withdrawn it from the inspection, than to have exposed it to the scrutiny, of parliament. Certainly they ought, of themselves, officially to have come armed with every sort of argument, which, by explaining, could excuse, a matter in itself of presumptive guilt. But the terrours of the house of commons are no longer for ministers.

On the other hand the peculiar character of the house of commons, as trustee of the public purse, would have led them to call with a punctilious solicitude for every public account, and to have examined into them with the most rigorous accuracy.

The capital use of an account is, that the reality of the charge, the reason of incurring it, and the justice and necessity of discharging it, should all appear antecedent to the payment. No man ever pays first, and calls for his account afterwards; because he would thereby let out of his hands the principal, and indeed only effectual, means of compelling a full and fair one. But, in national business, there is an additional reason for a previous production of every account. It is a check, perhaps the only one, upon a corrupt and prodigal use of public money. An account after payment is to no rational purpose an account. However, the house of commons thought all these to be antiquated principles; they were of opinion, that the most parliamentary way of proceeding was, to pay first what the court thought proper to demand, and to take its chance for an examination into accounts at some time of greater leisure.

The nation had settled £.800,000 a year on the crown, as sufficient for the support of its dignity, upon the estimate of its own ministers. When ministers came to parliament, and said that this allowance had not been sufficient for the purpose, and that they had incurred a debt of £.500 000, would it not have been natural for parliament first to have asked, how, and by what means, their appropriated allowance came to be insufficient? Would it not have savoured

of some attention to justice, to have seen in what periods of administration this debt had been originally incurred; that they might discover, and, if need were, animadvert on the persons who were found the most culpable? To put their hands upon such articles of expenditure as they thought improper or excessive, and to secure in future, against such misapplication or exceeding? Accounts for any other purposes are but a matter of curiosity, and no genuine parliamentary object. All the accounts which could answer any parliamentary end were refused, or postponed by previous questions. Every idea of prevention was rejected, as conveying an improper suspicion of the ministers of the crown.

When every leading account had been refused, many others were granted with sufficient facility.

But with great candour also, the house was informed, that hardly any of them could be ready until the next session; some of them perhaps not so soon. But, in order firmly to establish the precedent of *payment previous to account*, and to form it into a settled rule of the house, the god in the machine was brought down, nothing less than the wonder-working *law of parliament*. It was alleged, that it is the law of parliament, when any demand comes from the crown, that the house must go immediately into the committee of supply; in which committee it was allowed, that the production and examination of accounts would be quite proper and regular. It was therefore carried, that they should go into the committee without delay, and without accounts, in order to examine with great order and regularity things that could not possibly come before them. After this stroke of orderly and parliamentary wit and humour, they went into the committee; and very generously voted the payment.

There was a circumstance in that debate too remarkable to be overlooked. This debt of the civil list was all along argued upon the same footing as a debt of the state, contracted upon national authority. Its payment was urged as equally pressing upon the public faith and honour: and when the whole year's account was stated, in what is called *the budget*, the ministry valued themselves on the payment of so much public debt, just as if they had discharged £.500,000 of navy or exchequer bills. Though, in truth, their payment, from the sinking fund, of debt which was never contracted by parliamentary authority, was, to all intents and purposes, so much debt incurred. But such is the present notion of public credit, and payment of debt. No wonder that it produces such effects.

Nor was the house at all more attentive to a provident security against future, than it had been to a vindictive retrospect to past, mismanagements. I should have thought indeed that a ministerial promise, during their own continuance in office, might have been given, though this would have been but a poor security for the public. Mr. Pelham gave such an assurance, and he kept his word. But nothing was capable of extorting from our ministers any thing which had the least resemblance to a promise of confining the expenses of the civil list within the limits which had been settled by parliament. This reserve of theirs I look upon to be equivalent to the clearest declaration, that they were resolved upon a contrary course.

However, to put the matter beyond all doubt, in the speech from the throne, after thanking parliament for the relief so liberally granted, the ministers inform the two houses, that they will *endeavour* to confine the expenses of the civil government—within what limits, think you? those which the law had prescribed? Not in the least—"such limits as the *honour of the crown* can possibly admit."

Thus they established an *arbitrary* standard for that dignity which parliament had defined and limited to a *legal* standard. They gave themselves under the lax and indeterminate idea of the *honour of the crown*, a full loose for all manner of dissipation, and all manner of corruption. This arbitrary standard they were not afraid to hold out to both houses; while an idle and unoperative act of parliament, estimating the dignity of the crown at £.800,000, and confining it to that sum, adds to the number of obsolete statutes which load the shelves of libraries without any sort of advantage to the people.

After this proceeding, I suppose that no man can be so weak as to think that the crown is limited to any settled allowance whatsoever. For if the ministry has £.800,000 a year by the law of the land; and if by the law of parliament all the debts which exceed it are to be paid previous to the production of any account; I presume that this is equivalent to an income with no other limits than the abilities of the subject and the moderation of the court; that is to say, it is such an income as is possessed by every absolute monarch in Europe. It amounts, as a person of great ability said in the debate, to an unlimited power of drawing upon the sinking fund. Its effect on the public credit of this kingdom must be obvious; for in

vain is the sinking fund the great buttress of all the rest, if it be in the power of the ministry to resort to it for the payment of any debts which they may choose to incur, under the name of the civil list, and through the medium of a committee, which thinks itself obliged by law to vote supplies without any other account than that of the mere existence of the debt.

Five hundred thousand pounds is a serious sum. But it is nothing to the prolific principle upon which the sum was voted: a principle that may well be called, *the fruitful mother of an hundred more*. Neither is the damage to public credit of very great consequence, when compared with that which results to public morals and to the safety of the constitution, from the exhaustless mine of corruption opened by the precedent, and to be wrought by the principle, of the late payment of the debts of the civil list. The power of discretionary disqualification by one law of parliament, and the necessity of paying every debt of the civil list by another law of parliament, if suffered to pass unnoticed, must establish such a fund of rewards and terrours as will make parliament the best appendage and support of arbitrary power that ever was invented by the wit of man. This is felt. The quarrel is begun between the representatives and the people. The court faction have at length committed them.

In such a strait the wisest may well be perplexed, and the boldest staggered. The circumstances are in a great measure new. We have hardly any land-marks from the wisdom of our ancestors, to guide us. At best we can only follow the spirit of their proceeding in other cases. I know the diligence with which my observations on our public disorders have been made; I am very sure of the integrity of the motives on which they are published: I cannot be equally confident in any plan for the absolute cure of those disorders, or for their certain future prevention. My aim is to bring this matter into more public discussion. Let the sagacity of others work upon it. It is not uncommon for medical writers to describe histories of diseases very accurately, on whose cure they can say but very little.

The first ideas which generally suggest themselves, for the cure of parliamentary disorders, are, to shorten the duration of parliaments; and to disqualify all, or a great number of placemen, from a seat in the house of commons. Whatever efficacy there may be in those remedies, I am sure in the present state of things it is impossible to apply them. A restoration of the right of free election is a preliminary indispensable to every other reformation. What alterations ought afterwards to be made in the constitution, is a matter of deep and difficult research.

If I wrote merely to please the popular palate, it would indeed be as little troublesome to me as to another, to extol these remedies, so famous in speculation, but to which their greatest admirers have never attempted seriously to resort in practice. I confess then, that I have no sort of reliance upon either a triennial parliament, or a place-bill. With regard to the former, perhaps it might rather serve to counteract, than to promote the ends that are proposed by it. To say nothing of the horrible disorders among the people attending frequent elections, I should be fearful of committing, every three years, the independent gentlemen of the country into a contest with the treasury. It is easy to see which of the contending parties would be ruined first. Whoever has taken a careful view of public proceedings, so as to endeavour to ground his speculations on his experience, must have observed how prodigiously greater the power of ministry is in the first and last session of a parliament, than it is in the intermediate period, when members sit a little firm on their seats. The persons of the greatest parliamentary experience, with whom I have conversed, did constantly, in canvassing the fate of questions, allow something to the court side, upon account of the elections depending or imminent. The evil complained of, if it exists in the present state of things, would hardly be removed by a triennial parliament: for, unless the influence of government in elections can entirely be taken away, the more frequently they return, the more they will harass private independence; the more generally men will be compelled to fly to the settled systematic interest of government, and to the resources of a boundless civil list. Certainly something may be done, and ought to be done, towards lessening that influence in elections; and this will be necessary upon a plan either of longer or shorter duration of parliament. But nothing can so perfectly remove the evil, as not to render such contentions, too frequently repeated, utterly ruinous, first to independence of fortune, and then to independence of spirit. As I am only giving an opinion on this point, and not at all debating it in an adverse line, I hope I may be excused in another observation. With great truth I may aver, that I never remember to have talked on this subject with any man much conversant with public business, who considered short parliaments as a real improvement of the constitution. Gentlemen, warm in a popular cause, are ready

enough to attribute all the declarations of such persons to corrupt motives. But the habit of affairs, if, on one hand, it tends to corrupt the mind, furnishes it, on the other, with the means of better information. The authority of such persons will always have some weight. It may stand upon a par with the speculations of those who are less practised in business; and who, with perhaps purer intentions, have not so effectual means of judging. It is, besides, an effect of vulgar and puerile malignity to imagine, that every statesman is of course corrupt; and that his opinion, upon every constitutional point, is solely formed upon some sinister interest.

The next favourite remedy is a place-bill. The same principle guides in both; I mean, the opinion which is entertained by many, of the infallibility of laws and regulations, in the cure of public distempers. Without being as unreasonably doubtful as many are unwisely confident, I will only say, that this also is a matter very well worthy of serious and mature reflection. It is not easy to foresee, what the effect would be, of disconnecting with parliament, the greatest part of those who hold civil employments, and of such mighty and important bodies as the military and naval establishments. It were better, perhaps, that they should have a corrupt interest in the forms of the constitution, than that they should have none at all. This is a question altogether different from the disqualification of a particular description of revenue officers from seats in parliament; or, perhaps, of all the lower sorts of them from votes in elections. In the former case, only the few are affected; in the latter, only the inconsiderable. But a great official, a great professional, a great military and naval interest, all necessarily comprehending many people of the first weight, ability, wealth, and spirit, has been gradually formed in the kingdom. These new interests must be let into a share of representation, else possibly they may be inclined to destroy those institutions of which they are not permitted to partake. This is not a thing to be trifled with; nor is it every well-meaning man, that is fit to put his hands to it. Many other serious considerations occur. I do not open them here, because they are not directly to my purpose; proposing only to give the reader some taste of the difficulties that attend all capital changes in the constitution; just to hint the uncertainty, to say no worse, of being able to prevent the court, as long as it has the means of influence abundantly in its power, from applying that influence to parliament; and perhaps, if the public method were precluded, of doing it in some worse and more dangerous method. Underhand and oblique ways would be studied. The science of evasion, already tolerably understood, would then be brought to the greatest perfection. It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom, to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated; lest, by attempting a degree of purity impracticable in degenerate times and manners, instead of cutting off the subsisting ill practices, new corruptions might be produced for the concealment and security of the old. It were better, undoubtedly, that no influence at all could affect the mind of a member of parliament. But of all modes of influence, in my opinion, a place under the government is the least disgraceful to the man who holds it, and by far the most safe to the country. I would not shut out that sort of influence which is open and visible, which is connected with the dignity and the service of the state, when it is not in my power to prevent the influence of contracts, of subscriptions, of direct bribery, and those innumerable methods of clandestine corruption, which are abundantly in the hands of the court, and which will be applied as long as these means of corruption, and the disposition to be corrupted, have existence among us. Our constitution stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be a risk of oversetting it on the other. Every project of a material change in a government so complicated as ours, combined at the same time with external circumstances still more complicated, is a matter full of difficulties; in which a considerate man will not be too ready to decide; a prudent man too ready to undertake; or an honest man too ready to promise. They do not respect the public nor themselves, who engage for more than they are sure that they ought to attempt, or that they are able to perform. These are my sentiments, weak perhaps, but honest and unbiassed; and submitted entirely to the opinion of grave men, well affected to the constitution of their country, and of experience in what may best promote or hurt it.

Indeed, in the situation in which we stand, with an immense revenue, an enormous debt, mighty establishments, government itself a great banker and a great merchant, I see no other way for the preservation of a decent attention to public interest in the representatives, but *the interposition of the body of the people itself*, whenever it shall appear, by some flagrant and notorious act, by some capital innovation, that these representatives are going

to over-leap the fences of the law, and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interposition is a most unpleasant remedy. But, if it be a legal remedy, it is intended on some occasion to be used; to be used then only, when it is evident that nothing else can hold the constitution to its true principles.

The distempers of monarchy were the great subjects of apprehension and redress, in the last century; in this, the distempers of parliament. It is not in parliament alone that the remedy for parliamentary disorders can be completed; hardly indeed can it begin there. Until a confidence in government is re-established, the people ought to be excited to a more strict and detailed attention to the conduct of their representatives. Standards, for judging more systematically upon their conduct, ought to be settled in the meetings of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct lists of the voters in all important questions ought to be procured.

By such means something may be done. By such means it may appear who those are, that, by an indiscriminate support of all administrations, have totally banished all integrity and confidence out of public proceedings; have confounded the best men with the worst; and weakened and dissolved, instead of strengthening and compacting, the general frame of government. If any person is more concerned for government and order, than for the liberties of his country; even he is equally concerned to put an end to this course of indiscriminate support. It is this blind and undistinguishing support, that feeds the spring of those very disorders, by which he is frighted into the arms of the faction which contains in itself the source of all disorders, by enfeebling all the visible and regular authority of the state. The distemper is increased by his injudicious and preposterous endeavours, or pretences, for the cure of it.

An exteriour administration, chosen for its impotency, or after it is chosen purposely rendered impotent, in order to be rendered subservient, will not be obeyed. The laws themselves will not be respected, when those who execute them are despised; and they will be despised, when their power is not immediate from the crown, or natural in the kingdom. Never were ministers better supported in parliament. Parliamentary support comes and goes with office, totally regardless of the man, or the merit. Is government strengthened? It grows weaker and weaker. The popular torrent gains upon it every hour. Let us learn from our experience. It is not support that is wanting to government, but reformation. When ministry rests upon public opinion, it is not indeed built upon a rock of adamant; it has, however, some stability. But when it stands upon private humour, its structure is of stubble, and its foundation is on quicksand. I repeat it again—He that supports every administration, subverts all government. The reason is this: The whole business in which a court usually takes an interest goes on at present equally well, in whatever hands, whether high or low, wise or foolish, scandalous or reputable; there is nothing therefore to hold it firm to any one body of men, or to any one consistent scheme of politics. Nothing interposes, to prevent the full operation of all the caprices and all the passions of a court upon the servants of the public. The system of administration is open to continual shocks and changes, upon the principles of the meanest cabal, and the most contemptible intrigue. Nothing can be solid and permanent. All good men at length fly with horrour from such a service. Men of rank and ability, with the spirit which ought to animate such men in a free state, while they decline the jurisdiction of dark cabal on their actions and their fortunes, will, for both, cheerfully put themselves upon their country. They will trust an inquisitive and distinguishing parliament; because it does enquire, and does distinguish. If they act well, they know, that in such a parliament, they will be supported against any intrigue; if they act ill, they know that no intrigue can protect them. This situation, however awful, is honourable. But in one hour, and in the self-same assembly, without any assigned or assignable cause, to be precipitated from the highest authority to the most marked neglect, possibly into the greatest peril of life and reputation, is a situation full of danger, and destitute of honour. It will be shunned equally by every man of prudence, and every man of spirit.

Such are the consequences of the division of court from the administration; and of the division of public men among themselves. By the former of these, lawful government is undone; by the latter, all opposition to lawless power is rendered impotent. Government may in a great measure be restored, if any considerable bodies of men have honesty and resolution enough never to accept administration, unless this garrison of *king's men*, which is stationed, as in a citadel, to controul and enslave it, be entirely broken and disbanded, and every work they have thrown up be levelled with the ground. The disposition of public men to keep this corps together, and to act under it,

or to co-operate with it, is a touch-stone by which every administration ought in future to be tried. There has not been one which has not sufficiently experienced the utter incompatibility of that faction with the public peace, and with all the ends of good government: since, if they opposed it, they soon lost every power of serving the crown; if they submitted to it, they lost all the esteem of their country. Until ministers give to the public a full proof of their entire alienation from that system, however plausible their pretences, we may be sure they are more intent on the emoluments than the duties of office. If they refuse to give this proof, we know of what stuff they are made. In this particular, it ought to be the electors' business to look to their representatives. The electors ought to esteem it no less culpable in their member to give a single vote in parliament to such an administration, than to take an office under it; to endure it, than to act in it. The notorious infidelity and versatility of members of parliament, in their opinions of men and things, ought in a particular manner to be considered by the electors in the inquiry which is recommended to them. This is one of the principal holdings of that destructive system, which has endeavoured to unhinge all the virtuous, honourable, and useful connections in the kingdom.

This cabal has, with great success, propagated a doctrine which serves for a colour to those acts of treachery; and whilst it receives any degree of countenance, it will be utterly senseless to look for a vigorous opposition to the court party. The doctrine is this: That all political connections are in their nature factious, and as such ought to be dissipated and destroyed; and that the rule for forming administrations is mere personal ability, rated by the judgment of this cabal upon it, and taken by draughts from every division and denomination of public men. This decree was solemnly promulgated by the head of the court corps, the Earl of Bute himself, in a speech which he made, in the year 1766, against the then administration, the only administration which he has ever been known directly and publicly to oppose.

It is indeed in no way wonderful, that such persons should make such declarations. That connection and faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconstitutional statesmen. The reason is evident. Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas, when they lie dispersed, without concert, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts in business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest, subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perseverance or efficacy. In a connection, the most inconsiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value, and his use; out of it, the greatest talents are wholly unserviceable to the public. No man, who is not inflamed by vain-glory into enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single, unsupported, desultory, unsystematic endeavours are of power to defeat the subtle designs and united cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

It is not enough in a situation of trust in the commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of public duty. That duty demands and requires, that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right; but has taken special care, to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue somewhat out of humour with all sorts of connection in politics. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies a narrow, bigoted, and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest. But, where duty renders a critical

situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from the evils attendant upon it; and not to fly from the situation itself. If a fortress is seated in an unwholesome air, an officer of the garrison is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he must not desert his station. Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connections in politics; essentially necessary for the full performance of our public duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm, that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens,as that the bonds of our party weaken those by which we are held to our country.

Some legislators went so far as to make neutrality in party a crime against the state. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overstrain the principle. Certain it is, the best patriots in the greatest commonwealths have always commended and promoted such connections. *Idem sentire de republica*, was with them a principal ground of friendship and attachment; nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes. The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called *necessitudo sortis;* and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in the state as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honest means to advance to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connections had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame, upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of public trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, shewed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a public situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become *plus sages que les sages*, as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who have lived before us. It was their wish, to see public and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation, reciprocally supporting and supported. In one of the most fortunate periods of our history this country was governed by a *connection;* I mean the great connection of Whigs in the reign of Queen Anne. They were complimented upon the principle of this connection by a poet who was in high esteem with them. Addison, who knew their sentiments, could not praise them for what they considered as no proper subject of commendation. As a poet who knew his business, he could not applaud them for a thing which in general estimation was not highly reputable. Addressing himself to Britain,

> Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport,
> Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
> On the firm basis of desert they rise,
> From long-tried faith, and friendship's holy ties.

The Whigs of those days believed that the only proper method of rising into power was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined, that patriotism was a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or dearest connections in private life, and of all the virtues that rise from those relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine that a spirit of moderation was properly shewn in patiently bearing the sufferings of your friends; or that disinterestedness was clearly manifested at the expense of other people's fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that no men could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests.

These wise men, for such I must call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Somers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in these maxims upon which the whole fabric of public strength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childish talker. They were not afraid that they should be called an ambitious Junto; or that their resolution to stand or fall together should, by

placemen, be interpreted into a scuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politics, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connection will avow it is their first purpose, to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controuled, or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connection must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men, but measures:* a sort of charm, by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any public utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you, it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's connections should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connections, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of government be right or wrong, is *no matter of fact*, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt-acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal, where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wish to find no substance in a doctrine which has a tendency to destroy all test of character as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuse my adding something more towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obscurity to dishonesty has been able to cover with some degree of darkness and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connection, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connections (except some court factions)

ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will, in particular instances, think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of public business are related to, or dependent on, some great *leading general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connection. How men can proceed without any connection at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amid the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of public utility?

I remember an old scholastic aphorism, which says, "that the man who lives wholly detached from others, must be either an angel or a devil." When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected: in the one, to be placable; in the other immoveable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame, and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal force upon the activity of honest men; but critical exigencies now and then arise; and I am mistaken, if this be not one of them. Men will see the necessity of honest combination; but they may see it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themselves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of such a timely union as may enable them to oppose in favour of the laws, with the laws on their side, they may, at length, find themselves under the necessity of conspiring, instead of consulting. The law, for which they stand, may become a weapon in the hands of its bitterest enemies; and they will be cast, at length, into that miserable alternative, between slavery and civil confusion, which no good man can look upon without horrour; an alternative in which it is impossible he should take either part, with a conscience perfectly at repose. To keep that situation of guilt and remorse at the utmost distance, is therefore, our first obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitless violence. As yet we work in the light. The scheme of the enemies of public tranquillity has disarranged, it has not destroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exists such a faction as I have described; a faction ruling by the private inclinations of a court, against the general sense of the people; and that this faction, whilst it pursues a scheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the present at least) all the powers of executory government, rendering us abroad contemptible, and at home distracted; he will believe also, that nothing but a firm combination of public men against this body, and that, too, supported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large can possibly get the better of it. The people will see the necessity of restoring public men to an attention to the public opinion, and of restoring the constitution to its original principles. Above all,

they will endeavour to keep the house of commons from assuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that house, for its existence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themselves, as possible. This servitude is to a house of commons (like obedience to the divine law) "perfect freedom." For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deserted the only proper foundation of their power, they must seek a support in an abject and unnatural dependence somewhere else. When, through the medium of this just connection with their constituents the genuine dignity of the house of commons is restored, it will begin to think of casting from it, with scorn, as badges of servility, all the false ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for some time, disgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of CONTROUL. It will not suffer, that last of evils, to predominate in the country; men without popular confidence, public opinion, natural connection, or mutual trust, invested with all the powers of government.

When they have learned this lesson themselves, they will be willing and able to teach the court, that it is the true interest of the prince to have but one administration; and that one composed of those who recommend themselves to their sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obsequiousness to a favourite. Such men will serve their sovereign with affection and fidelity; because his choice of them, upon such principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to serve him effectually; because they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to serve their king with dignity; because they will never abuse his name to the gratification of their private spleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to the house of commons; when the house of commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things must remain in their present confusion; until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence; or until they sink into the dead repose of despotism.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

ON AMERICAN TAXATION.

1774.

PREFACE.

THE following speech has been much the subject of conversation; and the desire of having it printed was last summer very general. The means of gratifying the public curiosity were obligingly furnished from the notes of some gentlemen, members of the last parliament.

This piece has been for some months ready for the press. But a delicacy, possibly over-scrupulous, has delayed the publication to this time. The friends of administration have been used to attribute a great deal of the opposition to their measures in America to the writings published in England. The editor of this speech kept it back, until all the measures of government have had their full operation, and can be no longer affected, if ever they could have been affected, by any publication.

Most readers will recollect the uncommon pains taken at the beginning of the last session of the last parliament, and indeed during the whole course of it, to asperse the characters, and decry the measures, of those who were supposed to be friends to America; in order to weaken the effect of their opposition to the acts of rigour then preparing against the colonies. The speech contains a full refutation of the charges against that party with which Mr. Burke has all along acted. In doing this, he has taken a review of the effects of all the schemes which have been successively adopted in the government of the plantations. The subject is interesting; the matters of information various, and important; and the publication at this time, the editor hopes, will not be thought unseasonable.

SPEECH, &c.

During the last session of the last Parliament, on the 19th of April, 1774, Mr. Rose Fuller, member for Rye, made the following motion; that an act made in the seventh year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled "An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for allowing a drawback of the duties of customs upon the exportation from this kingdom of coffee and cocoa nuts, of the produce of the said colonies or plantations; for discontinuing the drawbacks payable on china earthen ware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the said colonies and plantations;" might be read.

And the same being read accordingly; he moved, "That this house will, upon this day sevennight, resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the duty of 3*d.* *per* pound weight upon tea, payable in all his majesty's dominions in America, imposed by the said act; and also the appropriation of the said duty."

On this latter motion a warm and interesting debate arose, in which Mr. Burke spoke as follows:

Sir,

I agree with the honourable gentleman* who spoke last, that this subject is not new in this house. Very disagreeably to this house, very unfortunately to this nation, and to the peace and prosperity of this whole empire, no topic has been more familiar to us. For nine long years, session after session, we have been lashed round and round this miserable circle of occasional arguments and temporary expedients. I am sure our heads must turn, and our stomachs nauseate with them. We have had them in every shape; we have looked at them in every point of view. Invention is exhausted; reason is fatigued; experience has given judgment; but obstinacy is not yet conquered.

The honourable gentleman has made one endeavour more to diversify the form of this disgusting argument. He has thrown out a speech composed almost entirely of challenges. Challenges are serious things; and as he is a man of prudence as well as resolution, I dare say he has very well weighed those challenges before he delivered them. I had long the happiness to sit at the same side of the house, and to agree with the honourable gentleman on all the American questions. My sentiments, I am sure, are well known to him; and I thought I had been perfectly acquainted with his. Though I find myself mistaken, he will still permit me to use the privilege of an old friendship, he will permit me to apply myself to the house under the sanction of his authority; and, on the various grounds he has measured out, to submit to you the poor opinions which I have formed, upon a matter of importance enough to demand the fullest consideration I could bestow upon it.

He has stated to the house two grounds of deliberation; one narrow and simple, and merely confined to the question on your paper: the other more large and more complicated; comprehending the whole series of the parliamentary proceedings with regard to America, their causes, and their consequences. With regard to the latter ground, he states it as useless, and thinks it may be even dangerous, to enter into so extensive a field of inquiry. Yet, to my surprise, he had hardly laid down this restrictive proposition, to which his authority would have given so much weight, when directly, and with the same authority, he condemns it; and declares it absolutely necessary to enter into the most ample historical detail. His zeal has thrown him a little out of his usual accuracy. In this perplexity what shall we do, Sir, who are willing to submit to the law he gives us? He has reprobated in one part of his speech the rule he had laid down for debate in the other; and, after narrowing the ground for all those who are to speak after him, he takes an excursion himself, as unbounded as the subject and the extent of his great abilities.

Sir, When I cannot obey all his laws, I will do the best I can. I will endeavour to obey such of them as have the sanction of his example; and to stick to that rule, which, though not consistent with the other, is the most rational. He was certainly in the right when he took the matter largely. I cannot prevail on myself to agree with him in his censure of his own conduct. It is not, he will give me

* Charles Wolfran Cornwall, Esq. lately appointed one of the lords of the treasury.

leave to say, either useless or dangerous. He asserts, that retrospect is not wise; and the proper, the only proper, subject of inquiry, is "not how we got into this difficulty, but how we are to get out of it." In other words, we are, according to him, to consult our invention, and to reject our experience. The mode of deliberation he recommends is diametrically opposite to every rule of reason, and every principle of good sense established among mankind. For, that sense and that reason, I have always understood, absolutely to prescribe, whenever we are involved in difficulties from the measures we have pursued, that we should take a strict review of those measures, in order to correct our errours if they should be corrigible; or at least to avoid a dull uniformity in mischief, and the unpitied calamity of being repeatedly caught in the same snare.

Sir, I will freely follow the honourable gentleman in his historical discussion, without the least management for men or measures, further than as they shall seem to me to deserve it. But before I go into that large consideration, because I would omit nothing that can give the house satisfaction, I wish to tread the narrow ground to which alone the honourable gentleman, in one part of his speech, has so strictly confined us.

He desires to know, whether, if we were to repeal this tax, agreeably to the proposition of the honourable gentleman who made the motion, the Americans would not take post on this concession, in order to make a new attack on the next body of taxes; and whether they would not call for a repeal of the duty on wine as loudly as they do now for the repeal of the duty on tea? Sir, I can give no security on this subject. But I will do all that I can, and all that can be fairly demanded. To the *experience* which the honourable gentleman reprobates in one instant, and reverts to in the next; to that experience, without the least wavering or hesitation on my part, I steadily appeal; and would to God there was no other arbiter to decide on the vote with which the house is to conclude this day.

When parliament repealed the stamp act in the year 1766, I affirm, first, that the Americans did *not* in consequence of this measure call upon you to give up the former parliamentary revenue which subsisted in that country; or even any one of the articles which compose it. I affirm also, that when, departing from the maxims of that repeal, you revived the scheme of taxation, and thereby filled the minds of the colonists with new jealousy, and all sorts of apprehensions, then it was that they quarrelled with the old taxes, as well as the new; then it was, and not till then, that they questioned all the parts of your legislative power; and by the battery of such questions have shaken the solid structure of this empire to its deepest foundations.

Of those two propositions I shall, before I have done, give such convincing, such damning proof, that however the contrary may be whispered in circles, or bawled in newspapers, they never more will dare to raise their voices in this house. I speak with great confidence. I have reason for it. The ministers are with me. *They* at least are convinced that the repeal of the stamp act had not, and that no repeal can have, the consequences which the honourable gentleman who defends their measures is so much alarmed at. To their conduct, I refer him for a conclusive answer to this objection. I carry my proof irresistibly into the very body of both ministry and parliament; not on any general reasoning growing out of collateral matter, but on the conduct of the honourable gentleman's ministerial friends on the new revenue itself.

The act of 1767, which grants this tea duty, sets forth in its preamble, that it was expedient to raise a revenue in America, for the support of the civil government there, as well as for purposes still more extensive. To this support the act assigns six branches of duties. About two years after this act passed, the ministry, I mean the present ministry, thought it expedient to repeal five of the duties, and to leave (for reasons best known to themselves) only the sixth standing. Suppose any person, at the time of that repeal, had thus addressed the minister,* "Condemning, as you do, the repeal of the stamp act, why do you venture to repeal the duties upon glass, paper, and painters' colours? Let your pretence for the repeal be what it will, are you not thoroughly convinced, that your concessions will produce, not satisfaction, but insolence in the Americans; and that the giving up these taxes will necessitate the giving up of all the rest?" This objection was as palpable then as it is now; and it was as good for preserving the five duties as for retaining the sixth. Besides, the minister will recollect, that the repeal of the stamp act had but just preceded his repeal; and the ill policy of that measure, (had it been so impolitic as it has been represented,) and the mischiefs it produced, were quite recent. Upon the principles therefore of the honourable gentleman, upon

* Lord North, then chancellor of the exchequer.

the principles of the minister himself, the minister has nothing at all to answer. He stands condemned by himself, and by all his associates old and new, as a destroyer, in the first trust of finance, of the revenues: and in the first rank of honour, as a betrayer of the dignity of his country.

Most men, especially great men, do not always know their well-wishers. I come to rescue that noble lord out of the hands of those he calls his friends; and even out of his own. I will do him the justice he is denied at home. He has not been this wicked or imprudent man. He knew that a repeal had no tendency to produce the mischiefs which give so much alarm to his honourable friend. His work was not bad in its principle, but imperfect in its execution; and the motion on your paper presses him only to complete a proper plan, which, by some unfortunate and unaccountable error, he had left unfinished.

I hope, Sir, the honourable gentleman who spoke last, is thoroughly satisfied, and satisfied out of the proceedings of ministry on their own favourite act, that his fears from a repeal are groundless. If he is not, I leave him, and the noble lord who sits by him, to settle the matter, as well as they can, together; for if the repeal of American taxes destroys all our government in America—He is the man!—and he is the worst of all the repealers, because he is the last.

But I hear it rung continually in my ears, now and formerly,—"the preamble! what will become of the preamble, if you repeal this tax?"—I am sorry to be compelled so often to expose the calamities and disgraces of parliament. The preamble of this law, standing as it now stands, has the lie direct given to it by the provisionary part of the act; if that can be called provisionary which makes no provision. I should be afraid to express myself in this manner, especially in the face of such a formidable array of ability as is now drawn up before me, composed of the ancient household troops of that side of the house, and the new recruits from this, if the matter were not clear and indisputable. Nothing but truth could give me this firmness; but plain truth and clear evidence can be beat down by no ability. The clerk will be so good as to turn to the act, and to read this favourite preamble:

Whereas it is expedient *that a revenue should be raised in your majesty's dominions in America, for making a more* certain *and* adequate *provision for defraying the charge of the* administration of justice, and support of civil government, *in such provinces where it shall be found necessary; and towards* further defraying *the expenses of* defending, protecting, and securing the said dominions.

You have heard this pompous performance. Now where is the revenue which is to do all these mighty things? Five sixths repealed—abandoned—sunk—gone—lost for ever. Does the poor solitary tea duty support the purposes of this preamble? Is not the supply there stated as effectually abandoned as if the tea duty had perished in the general wreck? Here, Mr. Speaker, is a precious mockery—a preamble without an act—taxes granted in order to be repealed—and the reasons of the grant still carefully kept up! This is raising a revenue in America! This is preserving dignity in England! If you repeal this tax in compliance with the motion, I readily admit that you lose this fair preamble. Estimate your loss in it. The object of the act is gone already; and all you suffer is the purging of the statute-book of the opprobrium of an empty, absurd, and false recital.

It has been said again and again, that the five taxes were repealed on commercial principles. It is so said in the paper in my hand;* a paper which I constantly carry about; which I have often used, and shall often use again. What is got by this paltry pretence of commercial principles I know not; for, if your government in America is destroyed by the *repeal of taxes*, it is of no consequence upon what ideas the repeal is grounded. Repeal this tax too upon commercial principles if you please. These principles will serve as well now as they did formerly. But you know that, either your objection to a repeal from these supposed consequences has no validity, or that this pretence never could remove it. This commercial motive never was believed by any man, either in America, which this letter is meant to sooth, or in England, which it is meant to deceive. It was impossible it should. Because every man, in the least acquainted with the detail of commerce, must know, that several of the articles on which the tax was repealed, were fitter objects of duties than almost any other articles that could possibly be chosen; without comparison more so, than the tea that was left taxed; as infinitely less liable to be eluded by contraband. The tax upon red and white lead was of this nature. You have, in this kingdom, an advantage in lead, that amounts to a monopoly. When you find yourself in this situation of advantage, you sometimes venture to tax even

* Lord Hillsborough's circular letter to the governours of the colonies, concerning the repeal of some of the duties laid in the act of 1767.

your own export. You did so, soon after the last war; when, upon this principle, you ventured to impose a duty on coals. In all the articles of American contraband trade, who ever heard of the smuggling of red lead, and white lead? You might, therefore, well enough, without danger of contraband, and without injury to commerce (if this were the whole consideration) have taxed these commodities. The same may be said of glass. Besides, some of the things taxed were so trivial, that the loss of the objects themselves and their utter annihilation out of American commerce, would have been comparatively as nothing. But is the article of tea such an object in the trade of England, as not to be felt, or felt but slightly, like white lead, and red lead, and painters' colours? Tea is an object of far other importance. Tea is perhaps the most important object, taking it with its necessary connections, of any in the mighty circle of our commerce. If commercial principles had been the true motives to the repeal, or had they been at all attended to, tea would have been the last article we should have left taxed for a subject of controversy.

Sir, it is not a pleasant consideration; but nothing in the world can read so awful and so instructive a lesson, as the conduct of ministry in this business, upon the mischief of not having large and liberal ideas in the management of great affairs. Never have the servants of the state looked at the whole of your complicated interests in one connected view. They have taken things, by bits and scraps, some at one time and one pretence, and some at another, just as they pressed, without any sort of regard to their relations or dependencies. They never had any kind of system, right or wrong; but only invented occasionally some miserable tale for the day, in order meanly to sneak out of difficulties, into which they had proudly strutted. And they were put to all these shifts and devices, full of meanness and full of mischief, in order to pilfer piece-meal a repeal of an act, which they had not the generous courage, when they found and felt their errour, honourably and fairly to disclaim. By such management, by the irresistible operation of feeble councils, so paltry a sum as three-pence in the eyes of a financier, so insignificant an article as tea in the eyes of a philosopher, have shaken the pillars of a commercial empire that circled the whole globe.

Do you forget that, in the very last year, you stood on the precipice of general bankruptcy? Your danger was indeed great. You were distressed in the affairs of the East India company; and you well know what sort of things are involved in the comprehensive energy of that significant appellation. I am not called upon to enlarge to you on that danger, which you thought proper yourselves to aggravate, and to display to the world with all the parade of indiscreet declamation. The monopoly of the most lucrative trades, and the possession of imperial revenues, had brought you to the verge of beggary and ruin. Such was your representation —such, in some measure, was your case. The vent of ten millions of pounds of this commodity, now locked up by the operation of an injudicious tax, and rotting in the warehouses of the company, would have prevented all this distress, and all that series of desperate measures which you thought yourselves obliged to take in consequence of it. America would have furnished that vent, which no other part of the world can furnish but America; where tea is next to a necessary of life; and where the demand grows upon the supply. I hope our dear-bought East India committees have done us at least so much good, as to let us know, that without a more extensive sale of that article, our East India revenues and acquisitions can have no certain connection with this country. It is through the American trade of tea that your East India conquests are to be prevented from crushing you with their burthen. They are ponderous indeed; and they must have that great country to lean upon, or they tumble upon your head. It is the same folly that has lost you at once the benefit of the west and the east. This folly has thrown open folding-doors to contraband; and will be the means of giving the profits of the trade of your colonies, to every nation but yourselves. Never did a people suffer so much for the empty words of a preamble. It must be given up. For on what principle does it stand? This famous revenue stands, at this hour, on all the debate, as a description of revenue not as yet known in all the comprehensive (but too comprehensive!) vocabulary of finance—*a preambulary tax*. It is indeed a tax of sophistry, a tax of pedantry, a tax of disputation, a tax of war and rebellion, a tax for any thing but benefit to the imposers, or satisfaction to the subject.

Well! but whatever it is, gentlemen will force the colonists to take the teas. You will force them? has seven years' struggle been yet able to force them? O but it seems "we are in the right.—The tax is trifling—in effect it is rather an exoneration than an imposition; three-fourths of the duty formerly payable on teas exported to America is taken off; the place of collection is only shifted; instead of the retention of a shilling from the drawback

here, it is three-pence custom paid in America." All this, Sir, is very true. But this is the very folly and mischief of the act. Incredible as it may seem, you know that you have deliberately thrown away a large duty which you held secure and quiet in your hands, for the vain hope of getting one three-fourths less, through every hazard, through certain litigation, and possibly through war.

The manner of proceeding in the duties on paper and glass, imposed by the same act, was exactly in the same spirit. There are heavy excises on those articles when used in England. On export, these excises are drawn back. But instead of withholding the drawback, which might have been done, with ease, without charge, without possibility of smuggling; and instead of applying the money (money already in your hands) according to your pleasure, you began your operations in finance by flinging away your revenue; you allowed the whole drawback on export, and then you charged the duty (which you had before discharged) payable in the colonies; where it was certain the collection would devour it to the bone; if any revenue were ever suffered to be collected at all. One spirit pervades and animates the whole mass.

Could any thing be a subject of more just alarm to America, than to see you go out of the plain high road of finance, and give up your most certain revenues and your clearest interest, merely for the sake of insulting your colonies? No man ever doubted that the commodity of tea could bear an imposition of three-pence. But no commodity will bear three-pence, or will bear a penny, when the general feelings of men are irritated, and two millions of people are resolved not to pay. The feelings of the colonies were formerly the feelings of Great Britain. Theirs were formerly the feelings of Mr. Hampden when called upon for the payment of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave. It is the weight of that preamble, of which you are so fond, and not the weight of the duty, that the Americans are unable and unwilling to bear.

It is then, Sir, upon the *principle* of this measure, and nothing else, that we are at issue. It is a principle of political expediency. Your act of 1767 asserts, that it is expedient to raise a revenue in America; your act of 1769, which takes away that revenue, contradicts the act of 1767; and by something much stronger than words, asserts, that it is not expedient. It is a reflection upon your wisdom to persist in a solemn parliamentary declaration of the expediency of any object, for which, at the same time, you make no sort of provision. And pray, Sir, let not this circumstance escape you; it is very material; that the preamble of this act, which we wish to repeal, is not *declaratory of right*, as some gentlemen seem to argue it; it is only a recital of the *expediency* of a certain exercise of a right supposed already to have been asserted; an exercise you are now contending for by ways and means, which you confess, though they were obeyed, to be utterly insufficient for their purpose. You are therefore at this moment in the awkward situation of fighting for a phantom; a quiddity; a thing that wants, not only a substance, but even a name; for a thing, which is neither abstract right, nor profitable enjoyment.

They tell you, Sir, that your dignity is tied to it. I know not how it happens, but this dignity of yours is a terrible incumbrance to you; for it has of late been ever at war with your interest, your equity, and every idea of your policy. Shew the thing you contend for to be reason; shew it to be common sense; shew it to be the means of attaining some useful end; and then I am content to allow it what dignity you please. But what dignity is derived from the perseverance in absurdity is more than I ever could discern. The honourable gentleman has said well—indeed, in most of his *general* observations I agree with him—he says, that this subject does not stand as it did formerly. Oh, certainly not! every hour you continue on this ill chosen ground, your difficulties thicken on you; and therefore my conclusion is, remove from a bad position as quickly as you can. The disgrace, and the necessity of yielding, both of them, grow upon you every hour of your delay.

But will you repeal the act, says the honourable gentleman, at this instant when America is in open resistance to your authority, and that you have just revived your system of taxation? He thinks he has driven us into a corner. But thus pent up, I am content to meet him; because I enter the lists supported by my old authority, his new friends, the ministers themselves. The honourable gentleman remembers, that about five years ago as great disturbances as the present prevailed in America on account of the new taxes. The ministers represented these disturbances as treasonable; and this house thought proper, on that representation, to make a famous address for a revival, and for a new application, of a statute of Henry VIII. We besought the king, in that well-

considered address, to enquire into treasons, and to bring the supposed traitors from America to Great Britain for trial. His majesty was pleased graciously to promise a compliance with our request. All the attempts from this side of the house to resist these violences, and to bring about a repeal, were treated with the utmost scorn. An apprehension of the very consequences now stated by the honourable gentleman, was then given as a reason for shutting the door against all hope of such an alteration. And so strong was the spirit for supporting the new taxes, that the session concluded with the following remarkable declaration. After stating the vigorous measures which had been pursued, the speech from the throne proceeds:

You have assured me of your firm *support in the* prosecution *of them. Nothing, in my opinion, could be more likely to enable the well disposed among my subjects in that part of the world, effectually to discourage and defeat the designs of the factious and seditious, than the hearty concurrence of every branch of the legislature, in* maintaining the execution of the laws in every *part of my dominions.*

After this no man dreamt that a repeal under this ministry could possibly take place. The honourable gentleman knows as well as I, that the idea was utterly exploded by those who sway the house. This speech was made on the ninth day of May, 1769. Five days after this speech, that is, on the 13th of the same month, the public circular letter, a part of which I am going to read to you, was written by Lord Hillsborough, secretary of state for the colonies. After reciting the substance of the king's speech, he goes on thus:

"*I can take upon me to assure you, notwithstanding insinuations to the contrary, from men with* factious and seditious views, *that his majesty's* present administration have at no time entertained a design to propose to parliament to lay any further taxes upon America, for the purpose of RAISING A REVENUE; *and that it is at present their intention to propose, the next session of parliament, to take off the duties upon glass, paper, and colours, upon consideration of such duties* having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce.

"*These have* always *been, and* still are *the sentiments of his* majesty's present servants; *and by which their conduct in* respect to America has been governed. *And* his majesty *relies upon your prudence and fidelity for such an explanation of* his *measures, as may tend to remove the prejudices which have been excited by the misrepresentations of those who are enemies to the peace and prosperity of Great Britain and her colonies; and to re-establish that mutual* confidence and affection, *upon which the glory and safety of the British empire depend.*"

Here, Sir, is a canonical book of ministerial scripture; the general epistle to the Americans. What does the gentleman say to it? Here a repeal is promised; promised without condition; and while your authority was actually resisted. I pass by the public promise of a peer relative to the repeal of taxes by this house. I pass by the use of the king's name in a matter of supply, that sacred and reserved right of the Commons. I conceal the ridiculous figure of parliament, hurling its thunders at the gigantic rebellion of America; and then five days after, prostrate at the feet of those assemblies we affected to despise; begging them, by the intervention of our ministerial sureties, to receive our submission; and heartily promising amendment. These might have been serious matters formerly; but we are grown wiser than our fathers. Passing, therefore, from the constitutional consideration to the mere policy, does not this letter imply, that the idea of taxing America for the purpose of revenue is an abominable project; when the ministry suppose none but *factious* men, and with seditious views could charge them with it? does not this letter adopt and sanctify the American distinction of *taxing for revenue?* does it not formally reject all future taxation on that principle? does it not state the ministerial rejection of such principle of taxation, not as the occasional, but the constant opinion of the king's servants? does it not say, (I care not how consistently, but does it not say,) that their conduct with regard to America has been *always* governed by this policy? It goes a great deal further. These excellent and trusty servants of the king, justly fearful lest they themselves should have lost all credit with the world, bring out the image of their gracious sovereign from the inmost and most sacred shrine, and they pawn him as a security for their promises.—"*His majesty* relies on your prudence and fidelity for such an explanation of *his* measures." These sentiments of the minister, and these measures of his majesty, can only relate to the principle and practice of taxing for a revenue; and accordingly Lord Botetourt, stating it as such, did, with great propriety, and in the exact spirit of his instructions, endeavour to remove the fears of the Virginian assembly, lest the sentiments, which it seems (unknown to the world) had *always* been those of the ministers, and by which *their* conduct in *respect to America had been governed*, should by

some possible revolution, favourable to wicked American taxes, be hereafter counteracted. He addresses them in this manner:

It may possibly be objected, that, as his Majesty's present administration are not immortal, *their successors may be inclined to attempt to undo what the present ministers shall have attempted to perform; and to that objection I can give but this answer; that it is my firm opinion, that the plan I have stated to you will certainly take place, and that it will never be departed from; and so determined am I for ever to abide by it, that I will be content to be declared infamous, if I do not, to the last hour of my life, at all times, in all places, and upon all occasions, exert every power with which I either am, or ever shall be legally invested, in order to obtain and* maintain *for the continent of America that* satisfaction *which I have been authorised to promise this day, by the* confidential *servants of our gracious sovereign, who, to my certain knowledge rates his honour so high,* that he would rather part with his crown, than preserve it by deceit.*

A glorious and true character! which (since we suffer his ministers with impunity to answer for his ideas of taxation) we ought to make it our business to enable his majesty to preserve in all its lustre. Let him have character, since ours is no more! Let some part of government be kept in respect!

This epistle was not the letter of Lord Hillsborough solely; though he held the official pen. It was the letter of the noble lord upon the floor,† and of all the king's then ministers, who (with I think the exception of two only) are his ministers at this hour. The very first news that a British parliament heard of what it was to do with the duties which it had given and granted to the king, was by the publication of the votes of American assemblies. It was in America that your resolutions were pre-declared. It was from thence that we knew to a certainty, how much exactly, and not a scruple more nor less, we were to repeal. We were unworthy to be let into the secret of our own conduct. The assemblies had *confidential* communications from his majesty's *confidential* servants. We were nothing but instruments. Do you, after this, wonder, that you have no weight and no respect in the colonies? After this, are you surprised, that parliament is every day and every where losing (I feel it with sorrow, I utter it with reluctance) that reverential affection, which so endearing a name of authority ought ever to carry with it; that you are obeyed solely from respect to the bayonet; and that this house, the ground and pillar of freedom, is itself held up only by the treacherous underpinning and clumsy buttresses of arbitrary power?

If this dignity, which is to stand in the place of just policy and common sense, had been consulted, there was a time for preserving it, and for reconciling it with any concession. If in the session of 1768, that session of idle terrour and empty menaces, you had, as you were often pressed to do, repealed these taxes; then your strong operations would have come justified and enforced, in case your concessions had been returned by outrages. But, preposterously, you began with violence; and before terrours could have any effect, either good or bad, your ministers immediately begged pardon, and promised that repeal to the obstinate Americans which they had refused in an easy, good-natured, complying British parliament. The assemblies, which had been publicly and avowedly dissolved for *their* contumacy, are called together to receive *your* submission. Your ministerial directors blustered like tragic tyrants here; and then went mumping with a sore leg in America, canting and whining, and complaining of faction, which represented them as friends to a revenue from the colonies. I hope nobody in this house will hereafter have the impudence to defend American taxes in the name of ministry. The moment they do, with this letter of attorney in my hand, I will tell them, in the authorised terms, they are wretches, "with factious and seditious views; enemies to the peace and prosperity of the mother country and the colonies," and subverters "of the mutual affection and confidence on which the glory and safety of the British empire depend."

After this letter, the question is no more on propriety or dignity. They are gone already. The faith of your sovereign is pledged for the

* A material point is omitted by Mr. Burke in this speech, viz. *the manner in which the continent received this royal assurance.* The assembly of Virginia, in their address in answer to Lord Botetourt's speech, express themselves thus: "We will not suffer our present hopes, arising from the pleasing prospect your lordship hath so kindly opened and displayed to us, to be dashed by the bitter reflection that any *future* administration will entertain a wish to depart from the *plan* which affords the surest and most permanent foundation of public tranquillity and happiness: No, my lord, we are sure *our most gracious sovereign*, under whatever changes may happen in his confidential servants, will remain immutable in the ways of truth and justice, and that he is *incapable of deceiving his faithful subjects;* and we must esteem your lordship's information not only as warranted, but even sanctified *by the royal word.*"

† Lord North.

political principle. The general declaration in the letter goes to the whole of it. You must therefore either abandon the scheme of taxing; or you must send the ministers tarred and feathered to America, who dared to hold out the royal faith for a renunciation for all taxes for revenue. Them you must punish, or this faith you must preserve. The preservation of this faith is of more consequence than the duties on *red lead*, or *white lead*, or on broken *glass*, or *atlas-ordinary*, or *demy-fine*, or *blue-royal*, or *bastard*, or *foolscap*, which you have given up; or the three-pence on tea which you retained. The letter went stamped with the public authority of this kingdom. The instructions for the colony government go under no other sanction; and America cannot believe, and will not obey you, if you do not preserve this channel of communication sacred. You are now punishing the colonies for acting on distinctions, held out by that very ministry which is here shining in riches, in favour, and in power; and urging the punishment of the very offence to which they had themselves been the tempters.

Sir, if reasons respecting simply your own commerce, which is your own convenience, were the sole grounds of the repeal of the five duties; why does Lord Hillsborough, in disclaiming in the name of the king and ministry their ever having had an intent to tax for revenue, mention it as the means "of re-establishing the confidence and affection of the colonies?" Is it a way of soothing *others*, to assure them that you will take good care of *yourself?* The medium, the only medium, for regaining their affection and confidence, is, that you will take off something oppressive to their minds. Sir, the letter strongly enforces that idea: for though the repeal of the taxes is promised on commercial principles, yet the means of counteracting "the insinuations of men with factious and seditious views," is, by a disclaimer of the intention of taxing for revenue, as a constant invariable sentiment and rule of conduct in the government of America.

I remember that the noble lord on the floor, not in a former debate to be sure, (it would be disorderly to refer to it, I suppose I read it somewhere,) but the noble lord was pleased to say, that he did not conceive how it could enter into the head of man to impose such taxes as those of 1767; I mean those taxes which he voted for imposing, and voted for repealing; as being taxes, contrary to all the principles of commerce, laid on *British Manufactures*.

I dare say the noble lord is perfectly well read, because the duty of his particular office requires he should be so, in all our revenue laws; and in the policy which is to be collected out of them. Now, Sir, when he had read this act of American revenue, and a little recovered from his astonishment, I suppose he made one step retrograde (it is but one) and looked at the act which stands just before in the statute book. The American revenue act is the forty-fifth chapter; the other to which I refer is the forty-fourth of the same session. These two acts are both to the same purpose; both revenue acts; both taxing out of the kingdom; and both taxing British manufactures exported. As the 45th is an act for raising a revenue in America, the 44th is an act for raising a revenue in the Isle of Man. The two acts perfectly agree in all respects, except one. In the act for taxing the Isle of Man, the noble lord will find (not, as in the American act, four or five articles) but almost the *whole body*, of British manufactures, taxed from two and a half to fifteen *per cent.* and some articles, such as that of spirits, a great deal higher. You did not think it uncommercial to tax the whole mass of your manufactures, and, let me add, your agriculture too; for, I now recollect, British corn is there also taxed up to ten *per cent.* and this too in the very head-quarters, the very citadel of smuggling, the Isle of Man. Now will the noble lord condescend to tell me why he repealed the taxes on your manufactures sent out to America, and not the taxes on the manufactures exported to the Isle of Man? The principle was exactly the same, the objects charged infinitely more extensive, the duties, without comparison higher. Why? why, notwithstanding all his childish pretexts, because the taxes were quietly submitted to in the Isle of Man; and because they raised a flame in America. Your reasons were political, not commercial. The repeal was made, as Lord Hillsborough's letter well expresses it, to regain "the confidence and affection of the colonies, on which the glory and safety of the British empire depend." A wise and just motive surely, if ever there was such. But the mischief and dishonour is, that you have not done what you had given the colonies just cause to expect, when your ministers disclaimed the idea of taxes for a revenue. There is nothing simple, nothing manly, nothing ingenuous, open, decisive, or steady, in the proceeding, with regard either to the continuance or the repeal of the taxes. The whole has an air of littleness and fraud. The article of tea is slurred over in the circular letter, as it were by accident—nothing is

said of a resolution either to keep that tax, or to give it up. There is no fair dealing in any part of the transaction.

If you mean to follow your true motive and your public faith, give up your tax on tea for raising a revenue, the principle of which has, in effect, been disclaimed in your name; and which produces you no advantage; no, not a penny. Or, if you choose to go on with a poor pretence instead of a solid reason, and will still adhere to your cant of commerce, you have ten thousand times more strong commercial reasons for giving up this duty on tea, than for abandoning the five others that you have already renounced.

The American consumption of teas is annually, I believe, worth £300,000 at the least farthing. If you urge the American violence as a justification of your perseverance in enforcing this tax, you know that you can never answer this plain question—Why did you repeal the others given in the same act, whilst the very same violence subsisted?—But you did not find the violence cease upon that concession.—No! because the concession was far short of satisfying the principle which Lord Hillsborough had abjured! or even the pretence on which the repeal of the other taxes was announced: and because, by enabling the East India company to open a shop for defeating the American resolution not to pay that specific tax, you manifestly showed a hankering after the principle of the act which you formerly had renounced. Whatever road you take leads to a compliance with this motion. It opens to you at the end of every vista. Your commerce, your policy, your promises, your reasons, your pretences, your consistency, your inconsistency,—all jointly oblige you to this repeal.

But still it sticks in our throats, if we go so far, the Americans will go farther.—We do not know that. We ought, from experience, rather to presume the contrary. Do we not know for certain, that the Americans are going on as fast as possible, whilst we refuse to gratify them? can they do more, or can they do worse, if we yield this point? I think this concession will rather fix a turnpike to prevent a further progress. It is impossible to answer for bodies of men. But I am sure the natural effect of fidelity, clemency, kindness in governours, is peace, good-will, order, and esteem, on the part of the governed. I would certainly, at least, give these fair principles a fair trial; which, since the making of this act to this hour, they never have had.

Sir, the honourable gentleman having spoken what he thought necessary upon the narrow part of the subject, I have given him, I hope, a satisfactory answer. He next presses me by a variety of direct challenges and oblique reflections to say something on the historical part. I shall, therefore, Sir, open myself fully on that important and delicate subject; not for the sake of telling you a long story, (which, I know, Mr. Speaker, you are not particularly fond of,) but for the sake of the weighty instruction that, I flatter myself, will necessarily result from it. It shall not be longer, if I can help it, than so serious a matter requires.

Permit me then, Sir, to lead your attention very far back; back to the act of navigation; the corner-stone of the policy of this country, with regard to its colonies. Sir, that policy was, from the beginning, purely commercial; and the commercial system was wholly restrictive. It was the system of a monopoly. No trade was let loose from that constraint, but merely to enable the colonists to dispose of what, in the course of your trade, you could not take; or to enable them to dispose of such articles as we forced upon them, and for which, without some degree of liberty, they could not pay. Hence all your specific and detailed enumerations: hence the innumerable checks and counterchecks: hence that infinite variety of paper chains by which you bind together this complicated system of the colonies. This principle of commercial monopoly runs through no less than twenty-nine acts of parliament, from the year 1660 to the unfortunate period of 1764.

In all those acts the system of commerce is established, as that, from whence alone you proposed to make the colonies contribute (I mean directly and by the operation of your superintending legislative power) to the strength of the empire. I venture to say, that during that whole period, a parliamentary revenue from thence was never once in contemplation. Accordingly, in all the number of laws passed with regard to the plantations, the words which distinguish revenue laws, specifically as such, were, I think, premeditately avoided. I do not say, Sir, that a form of words alters the nature of the law, or abridges the power of the lawgiver. It certainly does not. However, titles and formal preambles are not always idle words; and the lawyers frequently argue from them. I state these facts to show, not what was your right, but what has been your settled policy. Our revenue laws have usually a *title*, purporting their being *grants*; and the words *give and grant* usually precede the enacting parts. Although duties were imposed on America in

acts of King Charles the Second, and in acts of King William, no one title of giving "an aid to his majesty," or any other of the usual titles to revenue acts, was to be found in any of them till 1764; nor were the words "give and grant" in any preamble until the 6th of George the Second. However the title of this act of George the Second, notwithstanding the words of donation, considers it merely as a regulation of trade, "an act for the better securing of the trade of his majesty's sugar colonies in America." This act was made on a compromise of all, and at the express desire of a part, of the colonies themselves. It was therefore in some measure with their consent; and having a title directly purporting only a *commercial regulation*, and being in truth nothing more, the words were passed by, at a time when no jealousy was entertained, and things were little scrutinized. Even Governour Bernard, in his second printed letter, dated in 1763, gives it as his opinion, that "it was an act of *prohibition*, not of revenue." This is certainly true, that no act avowedly for the purpose of revenue, and with the ordinary title and recital taken together, is found in the statute book until the year I have mentioned; that is, the year 1764. All before this period stood on commercial regulation and restraint. The scheme of a colony revenue by British authority appeared therefore to the Americans in the light of a great innovation; the words of Governour Bernard's ninth letter, written in Nov. 1765, state this idea very strongly; "it must," says he, "have been supposed *such an innovation as a parliamentary taxation*, would cause a great *alarm*, and meet with much *opposition* in most parts of America; it was *quite new* to the people, and had no *visible bounds* set to it." After stating the weakness of government there, he says, "was this a time to introduce *so great a novelty* as a parliamentary inland taxation in America?" Whatever the right might have been, this mode of using it was absolutely new in policy and practice.

Sir, they who are friends to the schemes of American revenue say, that the commercial restraint is full as hard a law for America to live under. I think so too. I think it, if uncompensated, to be a condition of as rigorous servitude as men can be subject to. But America bore it from the fundamental act of navigation until 1764.—Why? because men do bear the inevitable constitution of their original nature with all its infirmities. The act of navigation attended the colonies from their infancy, grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength. They were confirmed in obedience to it, even more by usage than by law. They scarcely had remembered a time when they were not subject to such restraint. Besides, they were indemnified for it by a pecuniary compensation. Their monopolist happened to be one of the richest men in the world. By his immense capital (primarily employed, not for their benefit, but his own) they were enabled to proceed with their fisheries, their agriculture, their ship-building, (and their trade too within the limits,) in such a manner as got far the start of the slow languid operations of unassisted nature. This capital was a hot-bed to them. Nothing in the history of mankind is like their progress. For my part, I never cast an eye on their flourishing commerce, and their cultivated and commodious life, but they seem to me rather ancient nations grown to perfection through a long series of fortunate events, and a train of successful industry, accumulating wealth in many centuries, than the colonies of yesterday; than a set of miserable outcasts, a few years ago, not so much sent as thrown out, on the bleak and barren shore of a desolate wilderness three thousand miles from all civilized intercourse.

All this was done by England, whilst England pursued trade, and forgot revenue. You not only acquired commerce, but you actually created the very objects of trade in America; and by that creation you raised the trade of this kingdom at least four-fold. America had the compensation of your capital, which made her bear her servitude. She had another compensation, which you are now going to take away from her. She had, except the commercial restraint, every characteristic mark of a free people in all her internal concerns. She had the image of the British constitution. She had the substance. She was taxed by her own representatives. She chose most of her own magistrates. She paid them all. She had in effect the sole disposal of her own internal government. This whole state of commercial servitude and civil liberty, taken together, is certainly not perfect freedom; but comparing it with the ordinary circumstances of human nature, it was a happy and liberal condition.

I know, Sir, that great and not unsuccessful pains have been taken to inflame our minds by an outcry, in this house and out of it, that in America the act of navigation neither is, nor ever was, obeyed. But if you take the colonies through, I affirm, that its authority never was disputed; that it was no where disputed for any length of time; and on the

whole, that it was well observed. Wherever the act pressed hard, many individuals indeed evaded it. This is nothing. These scattered individuals never denied the law, and never obeyed it. Just as it happens whenever the laws of trade, whenever the laws of revenue, press hard upon the people in England; in that case all your shores are full of contraband. Your right to give a monopoly to the East India company, your right to lay immense duties on French brandy, are not disputed in England. You do not make this charge on any man. But you know that there is not a creek from Pentland Frith to the Isle of Wight, in which they do not smuggle immense quantities of teas, East India goods, and brandies. I take it for granted, that the authority of Governour Bernard in this point is indisputable. Speaking of these laws, as they regarded that part of America now in so unhappy a condition, he says, "I believe they are no where better supported than in this province; I do not pretend that it is entirely free from a breach of these laws; but that such a breach, if discovered, is justly punished." What more can you say of the obedience to any laws in any country? An obedience to these laws formed the acknowledgment, instituted by yourselves, for your superiority; and was the payment you originally imposed for your protection.

Whether you were right or wrong in establishing the colonies on the principles of commercial monopoly rather than on that of revenue, is at this day a problem of mere speculation. You cannot have both by the same authority. To join together the restraints of an universal internal and external monopoly, with an universal internal and external taxation, is an unnatural union; perfect uncompensated slavery. You have long since decided for yourself and them; and you and they have prospered exceedingly under that decision.

This nation, Sir, never thought of departing from that choice until the period immediately on the close of the last war. Then a scheme of government new in many things seemed to have been adopted. I saw, or thought I saw, several symptoms of a great change, whilst I sat in your gallery, a good while before I had the honour of a seat in this house. At that period the necessity was established of keeping up no less than twenty new regiments, with twenty colonels capable of seats in this house. This scheme was adopted with very general applause from all sides, at the very time that, by your conquests in America, your danger from foreign attempts in that part of the world was much lessened, or indeed rather quite over. When this huge increase of military establishment was resolved on, a revenue was to be found to support so great a burthen. Country gentlemen, the great patrons of œconomy, and the great resisters of a standing armed force, would not have entered with much alacrity into the vote for so large and so expensive an army, if they had been very sure that they were to continue to pay for it. But hopes of another kind were held out to them; and in particular, I well remember, that Mr. Townshend, in a brilliant harangue on this subject, did dazzle them, by playing before their eyes the image of a revenue to be raised in America.

Here began to dawn the first glimmerings of this new colony system. It appeared more distinctly afterwards, when it was devolved upon a person to whom, on other accounts, this country owes very great obligations. I do believe, that he had a very serious desire to benefit the public. But with no small study of the detail, he did not seem to have his view, at least equally, carried to the total circuit of our affairs. He generally considered his objects in lights that were rather too detached. Whether the business of an American revenue was imposed upon him altogether; whether it was entirely the result of his own speculation; or, what is more probable, that his own ideas rather coincided with the instructions he had received; certain it is, that, with the best intentions in the world, he first brought this fatal scheme into form, and established it by act of parliament.

No man can believe, that at this time of day I mean to lean on the venerable memory of a great man, whose loss we deplore in common. Our little party-differences have been long ago composed; and I have acted more with him, and certainly with more pleasure with him, than ever I acted against him. Undoubtedly Mr. Grenville was a first-rate figure in this country. With a masculine understanding, and a stout and resolute heart, he had an application undissipated and unwearied. He took public business, not as a duty which he was to fulfil, but as a pleasure he was to enjoy; and he seemed to have no delight out of this house, except in such things as some way related to the business that was to be done within it. If he was ambitious, I will say this for him, his ambition was of a noble and generous strain. It was to raise himself, not by the low pimping politics of a court, but to win his way to power, through the laborious gradations of public service; and to secure himself a well-earned rank in parliament, by a thorough knowledge of its

constitution, and a perfect practice in all its business.

Sir, if such a man fell into errours, it must be from defects not intrinsical; they must be rather sought in the particular habits of his life; which, though they do not alter the groundwork of character, yet tinge it with their own hue. He was bred in a profession. He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding, than all the other kinds of learning put together; but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalise the mind exactly in the same proportion. Passing from that study he did not go very largely into the world; but plunged into business; I mean into the business of office; and the limited and fixed methods and forms established there. Much knowledge is to be had undoubtedly in that line; and there is no knowledge which is not valuable. But it may be truly said, that men too much conversant in office, are rarely minds of remarkable enlargement. Their habits of office are apt to give them a turn to think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms in which it is conducted. These forms are adapted to ordinary occasions; and therefore persons who are nurtured in office, do admirably well, as long as things go on in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, and the waters out, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and a far more extensive comprehension of things is requisite than ever office gave, or than office can ever give. Mr. Grenville thought better of the wisdom and power of human legislation than in truth it deserves. He conceived, and many conceived along with him, that the flourishing trade of this country was greatly owing to law and institution, and not quite so much to liberty; for but too many are apt to believe regulation to be commerce, and taxes to be revenue. Among regulations, that which stood first in reputation was his idol. I mean the act of navigation. He has often professed it to be so. The policy of that act is, I readily admit, in many respects well understood. But I do say, that if the act be suffered to run the full length of its principle, and is not changed and modified according to the change of times and the fluctuation of circumstances, it must do great mischief, and frequently even defeat its own purpose.

After the war, and in the last years of it, the trade of America had increased far beyond the speculations of the most sanguine imaginations. It swelled out on every side. It filled all its proper channels to the brim. It overflowed with a rich redundance, and breaking its banks on the right and on the left, it spread out upon some places, where it was indeed improper, upon others where it was only irregular. It is the nature of all greatness not to be exact; and great trade will always be attended with considerable abuses. The contraband will always keep pace in some measure with the fair trade. It should stand as a fundamental maxim, that no vulgar precaution ought to be employed in the cure of evils, which are closely connected with the cause of our prosperity. Perhaps this great person turned his eyes somewhat less than was just, towards the incredible increase of the fair trade; and looked with something of too exquisite a jealousy towards the contraband. He certainly felt a singular degree of anxiety on the subject; and even began to act from that passion earlier than is commonly imagined. For whilst he was first lord of the admiralty, though not strictly called upon in his official line, he presented a very strong memorial to the lords of the treasury, (my Lord Bute was then at the head of the board;) heavily complaining of the growth of the illicit commerce in America. Some mischief happened even at that time from this over-earnest zeal. Much greater happened afterwards when it operated with greater power in the highest department of the finances. The bonds of the act of navigation were straitened so much, that America was on the point of having no trade, either contraband or legitimate. They found, under the construction and execution then used, the act no longer trying but actually strangling them. All this coming with new enumerations of commodities; with regulations which in a manner put a stop to the mutual coasting intercourse of the colonies; with the appointment of courts of admiralty under various improper circumstances; with a sudden extinction of the paper currencies; with a compulsory provision for the quartering of soldiers; the people of America thought themselves proceeded against as delinquents, or at best as people under suspicion of delinquency; and in such a manner, as they imagined, their recent services in the war did not at all merit. Any of these innumerable regulations, perhaps, would not have alarmed alone; some might be thought reasonable; the multitude struck them with terrour.

But the grand manœuvre in that business of new regulating the colonies, was the 15th act of the fourth of George III.; which, besides con-

taining several of the matters to which I have just alluded, opened a new principle: and here properly began the second period of the policy of this country with regard to the colonies; by which the scheme of a regular plantation parliamentary revenue was adopted in theory, and settled in practice. A revenue not substituted in the place of, but superadded to, a monopoly; which monopoly was enforced at the same time with additional strictness, and the execution put into military hands.

This act, Sir, had for the first time the title of "granting duties in the colonies and plantations of America;" and for the first time it was asserted in the preamble, "that it was *just* and *necessary* that a revenue should be raised there." Then came the technical words of "giving and granting," and thus a complete American revenue act was made in all the forms, and with a full avowal of the right, equity, policy, and even necessity of taxing the colonies, without any formal consent of theirs. There are contained also in the preamble to that act these very remarkable words—the commons, &c. —"being desirous to make *some* provision in the *present* session of parliament *towards* raising the said revenue." By these words it appeared to the colonies, that this act was but a beginning of sorrows; that every session was to produce something of the same kind; that we were to go on from day to day, in charging them with such taxes as we pleased, for such a military force as we should think proper. Had this plan been pursued, it was evident that the provincial assemblies, in which the Americans felt all their portion of importance, and beheld their sole image of freedom, were *ipso facto* annihilated. This ill prospect before them seemed to be boundless in extent, and endless in duration. Sir, they were not mistaken. The ministry valued themselves when this act passed, and when they gave notice of the stamp act, that both of the duties came very short of their ideas of American taxation. Great was the applause of this measure here. In England we cried out for new taxes on America, whilst they cried out that they were nearly crushed with those which the war and their own grants had brought upon them.

Sir, it has been said in the debate, that when the first American revenue act (the act in 1764, imposing the port duties) passed, the Americans did not object to the principle. It is true they touched it but very tenderly. It was not a direct attack. They were, it is true, as yet novices; as yet unaccustomed to direct attacks upon any of the rights of parliament. The duties were port duties, like those they had been accustomed to bear; with this difference, that the title was not the same, the preamble not the same, and the spirit altogether unlike. But of what service is this observation to the cause of those that make it? It is a full refutation of the pretence for their present cruelty to America; for it shews, out of their own mouths, that our colonies were backward to enter into the present vexatious and ruinous controversy.

There is also another circulation abroad, (spread with a malignant intention, which I cannot attribute to those who say the same thing in this house,) that Mr. Grenville gave the colony agents an option for their assemblies to tax themselves, which they had refused. I find that much stress is laid on this, as a fact. However, it happens neither to be true nor possible. I will observe first, that Mr. Grenville never thought fit to make this apology for himself in the innumerable debates that were had upon the subject. He might have proposed to the colony agents, that they should agree in some mode of taxation as the ground of an act of parliament. But he never could have proposed that they should tax themselves on requisition, which is the assertion of the day. Indeed, Mr. Grenville well knew, that the colony agents could have no general powers to consent to it; and they had no time to consult their assemblies for particular powers, before he passed his first revenue act. If you compare dates, you will find it impossible. Burthened as the agents knew the colonies were at that time, they could not give the least hope of such grants. His own favourite governour was of opinion that the Americans were not then taxable objects:

"*Nor was the time less favourable to the* equity *of such a taxation. I don't mean to dispute the reasonableness of America contributing to the charges of Great Britain* when she is able; *nor, I believe, would the Americans themselves have disputed it, at a* proper time and season. *But it should be considered, that the American governments themselves have, in the prosecution of the late war, contracted very large debts; which it will take some years to pay off, and in the mean time occasion very* burthensome taxes for that purpose *only. For instance, this government, which is as much before-hand as any, raises every year £37,500 sterling for sinking their debt, and must continue it for four years longer at least before it will be clear.*"

These are the words of Governour Bernard's letter to a member of the old ministry, and which he has since printed. Mr. Grenville could not have made this proposition to the

agents, for another reason. He was of opinion, which he has declared in this house an hundred times, that the colonies could not legally grant any revenue to the crown; and that infinite mischiefs would be the consequence of such a power. When Mr. Grenville had passed the first revenue act, and in the same session had made this house come to a resolution for laying a stamp-duty on America, between that time and the passing the stamp-act into a law, he told a considerable and most respectable merchant, a member of this house, whom I am truly sorry I do not now see in his place, when he represented against this proceeding, that if the stamp-duty was disliked, he was willing to exchange it for any other equally productive; but that, if he objected to the Americans being taxed by parliament, he might save himself the trouble of the discussion, as he was determined on the measure. This is the fact, and, if you please, I will mention a very unquestionable authority for it.

Thus, Sir, I have disposed of this falsehood. But falsehood has a perennial spring. It is said, that no conjecture could be made of the dislike of the colonies to the principle. This is as untrue as the other. After the resolution of the house, and before the passing of the stamp-act, the colonies of Massachusett's Bay and New-York did send remonstrances, objecting to this mode of parliamentary taxation. What was the consequence? They were suppressed; they were put under the table; notwithstanding an order of council to the contrary, by the ministry which composed the very council that had made the order; and thus the house proceeded to its business of taxing without the least regular knowledge of the objections which were made to it. But to give that house its due, it was not over desirous to receive information, or to hear remonstrance. On the 15th of February 1765, whilst the stamp-act was under deliberation, they refused with scorn even so much as to receive four petitions presented from so respectable colonies as Connecticut, Rhode Island, Virginia and Carolina; besides one from the traders of Jamaica. As to the colonies, they had no alternative left to them, but to disobey; or to pay the taxes imposed by that parliament which was not suffered, or did not suffer itself, even to hear them remonstrate upon the subject.

This was the state of the colonies before his majesty thought fit to change his ministers. It stands upon no authority of mine. It is proved by uncontrovertible records. The honourable gentleman has desired some of us to lay our hands upon our hearts, and answer to his queries upon the historical part of this consideration; and by his manner (as well as my eyes could discern it) he seemed to address himself to me.

Sir, I will answer him as clearly as I am able, and with great openness; I have nothing to conceal. In the year sixty-five, being in a very private station, far enough from any line of business, and not having the honour of a seat in this house, it was my fortune, unknowing and unknown to the then ministry, by the intervention of a common friend, to become connected with a very noble person, and at the head of the treasury department. It was indeed in a situation of little rank and no consequence, suitable to the mediocrity of my talents and pretensions. But a situation near enough to enable me to see, as well as others, what was going on; and I did see in that noble person such sound principles, such an enlargement of mind, such clear and sagacious sense, and such unshaken fortitude, as have bound me, as well as others much better than me, by an inviolable attachment to him from that time forward. Sir, Lord Rockingham very early in that summer received a strong representation from many weighty English merchants and manufacturers, from governours of provinces and commanders of men of war, against almost the whole of the American commercial regulations: and particularly with regard to the total ruin which was threatened to the Spanish trade. I believe, Sir, the noble lord soon saw his way in this business. But he did not rashly determine against acts which it might be supposed were the result of much deliberation. However, Sir, he scarcely began to open the ground, when the whole veteran body of office took the alarm. A violent outcry of all (except those who knew and felt the mischief) was raised against any alteration. On one hand, his attempt was a direct violation of treaties and public law.—On the other, the act of navigation and all the corps of trade laws were drawn up in array against it.

The first step the noble lord took, was to have the opinion of his excellent, learned, and ever-lamented friend the late Mr. Yorke, then attorney-general, on the point of law. When he knew that formally and officially, which in substance he had known before, he immediately despatched orders to redress the grievance. But I will say it for the then minister, he is of that constitution of mind, that I know he would have issued, on the same critical occasion, the very same orders, if the acts of trade had been, as they were not, directly

against him; and would have cheerfully submitted to the equity of parliament for his indemnity.

On the conclusion of this business of the Spanish trade, the news of the troubles, on account of the stamp-act, arrived in England. It was not until the end of October that these accounts were received. No sooner had the sound of that mighty tempest reached us in England, than the whole of the then opposition, instead of feeling humbled by the unhappy issue of their measures, seemed to be infinitely elated, and cried out, that the ministry, from envy to the glory of their predecessors, were prepared to repeal the stamp-act. Near nine years after, the honourable gentleman takes quite opposite ground, and now challenges me to put my hand to my heart, and say, whether the ministry had resolved on the repeal till a considerable time after the meeting of parliament. Though I do not very well know what the honourable gentleman wishes to infer from the admission, or from the denial, of this fact, on which he so earnestly adjures me; I do put my hand on my heart, and assure him, that they did *not* come to a resolution directly to repeal. They weighed this matter as its difficulty and importance required. They considered maturely among themselves. They consulted with all who could give advice or information. It was not determined until a little before the meeting of parliament; but it was determined, and the main lines of their own plan marked out, before that meeting. Two questions arose (I hope I am not going into a narrative troublesome to the house)

[A cry of, go on, go on.]

The first of the two considerations was, whether the repeal should be total, or whether only partial; taking out every thing burthensome and productive, and reserving only an empty acknowledgment, such as a stamp on cards or dice. The other question was, on what principle the act should be repealed? On this head also two principles were started. One, that the legislative rights of this country, with regard to America, were not entire, but had certain restrictions and limitations. The other principle was, that taxes of this kind were contrary to the fundamental principles of commerce on which the colonies were founded; and contrary to every idea of political equity; by which equity we are bound, as much as possible, to extend the spirit and benefit of the British constitution to every part of the British dominions. The option, both of the measure, and of the principle of repeal, was made before the session; and I wonder how any one can read the king's speech at the opening of that session, without seeing in that speech both the repeal and the declaratory act very sufficiently crayoned out. Those who cannot see this can see nothing.

Surely the honourable gentleman will not think that a great deal less time than was then employed, ought to have been spent in deliberation; when he considers that the news of the troubles did not arrive till towards the end of October. The parliament sat to fill the vacancies on the 14th day of December, and on business the 14th of the following January.

Sir, a partial repeal, or, as the *bon ton* of the court then was, a *modification*, would have satisfied a timid, unsystematic, procrastinating ministry, as such a measure has since done such a ministry. A modification is the constant resource of weak undeciding minds. To repeal by a denial of our right to tax in the preamble, (and this too did not want advisers,) would have cut, in the heroic style, the Gordian knot with a sword. Either measure would have cost no more than a day's debate. But when the total repeal was adopted; and adopted on principles of policy, of equity, and of commerce; this plan made it necessary to enter into many and difficult measures. It became necessary to open a very large field of evidence commensurate to these extensive views. But then this labour did knight's service. It opened the eyes of several to the true state of the American affairs; it enlarged their ideas; it removed prejudices; and it conciliated the opinions and affections of men. The noble lord, who then took the lead in administration, my honourable friend* under me, and a right honourable gentleman† (if he will not reject his share, and it was a large one, of this business) exerted the most laudable industry in bringing before you the fullest, most impartial, and least-garbled body of evidence that ever was produced to this house. I think the inquiry lasted in the committee for six weeks; and at its conclusion this house, by an independent, noble, spirited, and unexpected majority; by a majority that will redeem all the acts ever done by majorities in parliament; in the teeth of all the old mercenary Swiss of state, in despite of all the speculators and augurs of political events, in defiance of the whole embattled legion of veteran pensioners and practised instruments of a court, gave a total repeal to the stamp-act, and (if it had been so permitted) a lasting peace to this whole empire.

* Mr. Dowdeswell. † General Conway.

I state, Sir, these particulars, because this act of spirit and fortitude has lately been, in the circulation of the season, and in some hazarded declamations in this house, attributed to timidity. If, Sir, the conduct of ministry, in proposing the repeal, had arisen from timidity with regard to themselves, it would have been greatly to be condemned. Interested timidity disgraces as much in the cabinet, as personal timidity does in the field. But timidity, with regard to the well-being of our country, is heroic virtue. The noble lord who then conducted affairs, and his worthy colleagues, whilst they trembled at the prospect of such distresses as you have since brought upon yourselves, were not afraid steadily to look in the face that glaring and dazzling influence at which the eyes of eagles have blenched. He looked in the face one of the ablest, and, let me say, not the most scrupulous oppositions, that perhaps ever was in this house, and withstood it, unaided by even one of the usual supports of administration. He did this when he repealed the stamp-act. He looked in the face a person he had long respected and regarded, and whose aid was then particularly wanting; I mean Lord Chatham. He did this when he passed the declaratory act.

It is now given out for the usual purposes, by the usual emissaries, that Lord Rockingham did not consent to the repeal of this act until he was bullied into it by Lord Chatham; and the reporters have gone so far as publicly to assert, in a hundred companies, that the honourable gentleman under the gallery,* who proposed the repeal in the American committee, had another set of resolutions in his pocket directly the reverse of those he moved. These artifices of a desperate cause are, at this time spread abroad, with incredible care, in every part of the town, from the highest to the lowest companies; as if the industry of the circulation were to make amends for the absurdity of the report.

Sir, whether the noble lord is of a complexion to be bullied by Lord Chatham, or by any man, I must submit to those who know him. I confess, when I look back to that time, I consider him as placed in one of the most trying situations in which, perhaps, any man ever stood. In the house of peers there were very few of the ministry, out of the noble lord's own particular connection, (except Lord Egmont, who acted, as far as I could discern, an honourable and manly part,) that did not look to some other future arrangement, which warped his politics. There were in both houses new and menacing appearances, that might very naturally drive any other, than a most resolute minister, from his measure or from his station. The household troops openly revolted. The allies of ministry, (those, I mean, who supported some of their measures, but refused responsibility for any) endeavoured to undermine their credit, and to take ground that must be fatal to the success of the very cause which they would be thought to countenance. The question of the repeal was brought on by ministry in the committee of this house, in the very instant when it was known that more than one court negociation was carrying on with the heads of the opposition. Every thing, upon every side, was full of traps and mines. Earth below shook; heaven above menaced; all the elements of ministerial safety were dissolved. It was in the midst of this chaos of plots and counter-plots; it was in the midst of this complicated warfare against public opposition and private treachery, that the firmness of that noble person was put to the proof. He never stirred from his ground; no, not an inch. He remained fixed and determined, in principle, in measure, and in conduct. He practised no managements. He secured no retreat. He sought no apology.

I will likewise do justice, I ought to do it, to the honourable gentleman who led us in this house.* Far from the duplicity wickedly charged on him, he acted his part with alacrity and resolution. We all felt inspired by the example he gave us, down even to myself, the weakest in that phalanx. I declare for one, I knew well enough (it could not be concealed from any body) the true state of things; but, in my life, I never came with so much spirits into this house. It was a time for a *man* to act in. We had powerful enemies; but we had faithful and determined friends; and a glorious cause. We had a great battle to fight; but we had the means of fighting; not as now, when our arms are tied behind us. We did fight that day and conquer.

I remember, Sir, with a melancholy pleasure, the situation of the honourable gentleman* who made the motion for the repeal; in that crisis, when the whole trading interest of this empire, crammed into your lobbies, with a trembling and anxious expectation, waited, almost to a winter's return of light, their fate from your resolutions. When, at length

* General Conway.

* General Conway.

you had determined in their favour, and your doors, thrown open, shewed them the figure of their deliverer in the well-earned triumph of his important victory, from the whole of that grave multitude there arose an involuntary burst of gratitude and transport. They jumped upon him like children on a long absent father. They clung about him as captives about their redeemer. All England, all America, joined to his applause. Nor did he seem insensible to the best of all earthly rewards, the love and admiration of his fellow citizens. *Hope elevated and joy brightened his crest.* I stood near him; and his face, to use the expression of the scripture of the first martyr, "his face was as if it had been the face of an angel." I do not know how others feel; but if I had stood in that situation, I never would have exchanged it for all that kings in their profusion could bestow. I did hope that that day's danger and honour would have been a bond to hold us all together for ever. But, alas! that, with other pleasing visions, is long since vanished.

Sir, this act of supreme magnanimity has been represented, as if it had been a measure of an administration, that, having no scheme of their own, took a middle line, pilfered a bit from one side and a bit from the other. Sir, they took *no* middle lines. They differed fundamentally from the schemes of both parties; but they preserved the objects of both. They preserved the authority of Great Britain. They preserved the equity of Great Britain. They made the declaratory-act; they repealed the stamp-act. They did both *fully*; because the declaratory-act was *without qualification*; and the repeal of the stamp-act *total*. This they did in the situation I have described.

Now, Sir, what will the adversary say to both these acts? If the principle of the declaratory-act was not good, the principle we are contending for this day is monstrous. If the principle of the repeal was not good, why are we not at war for a real, substantial, effective revenue? If both were bad; why has this ministry incurred all the inconveniences of both and of all schemes? Why have they enacted, repealed, enforced, yielded, and now attempt to enforce again?

Sir, I think I may as well now, as at any other time, speak to a certain matter of fact, not wholly unrelated to the question under your consideration. We, who would persuade you to revert to the ancient policy of this kingdom, labour under the effect of this short current phrase, which the court leaders have given out to all their corps, in order to take away the credit of those who would prevent you from that frantic war you are going to wage upon your colonies. Their cant is this; "All the disturbances in America have been created by the repeal of the stamp-act." I suppress for a moment my indignation at the falsehood, baseness, and absurdity of this most audacious assertion. Instead of remarking on the motives and character of those who have issued it for circulation, I will clearly lay before you the state of America, antecedently to that repeal; after the repeal; and since the renewal of the schemes of American taxation.

It is said, that the disturbances, if there were any, before the repeal, were slight; and without difficulty or inconvenience might have been suppressed. For an answer to this assertion I will send you to the great author and patron of the stamp-act, who certainly meaning well to the authority of this country, and fully apprized of the state of that, made, before a repeal was so much as agitated in this house, the motion which is on your journals; and which, to save the clerk the trouble of turning to it, I will now read to you. It was for an amendment to the address of the 17th of December, 1765:

"*To express our just resentment and indignation at the* outrageous tumults and insurrections *which have been excited and carried on in North America; and at the resistance given, by* open *and* rebellious *force, to the execution of the laws in that part of his majesty's dominions. And to assure his majesty, that his faithful commons, animated with the warmest duty and attachment to his royal person and government, will firmly and effectually support his majesty in all such measures as shall be necessary for preserving and supporting the legal dependance of the colonies on the mother country,* &c. &c."

Here was certainly a disturbance preceding the repeal; such a disturbance as Mr. Grenville thought necessary to qualify by the name of an *insurrection*, and the epithet of a *rebellious* force: terms much stronger than any, by which, those who then supported his motion, have ever since thought proper to distinguish the subsequent disturbances in America. They were disturbances which seemed to him and his friends to justify as strong a promise of support, as hath been usual to give in the beginning of a war with the most powerful and declared enemies. When the accounts of the American governours came before the house, they appeared stronger even than the warmth of public imagination had painted them; so much stronger, that the papers on your table bear me out in saying, that all the late distur-

bances, which have been at one time the minister's motives for the repeal of five out of six of the new court taxes, and are now his pretences for refusing to repeal that sixth, did not amount—why do I compare them? no, not to a tenth part of the tumults and violence which prevailed long before the repeal of that act.

Ministry cannot refuse the authority of the commander in chief, General Gage, who, in his letter of the 4th of November, from New-York, thus represents the state of things:

"*It is difficult to say, from the* highest to the lowest, *who has not been* accessary *to this* insurrection, *either by writing or* mutual agreements *to oppose the act, by what they are pleased to term all legal opposition to it. Nothing effectual has been proposed, either to prevent or quell the tumult.* The rest of the provinces are in the same situation *as to a positive refusal to take the stamps; and threatening those who shall take them*, to plunder and murder them; *and this affair stands* in all the provinces, *that unless the act, from its own nature, enforce itself, nothing but a* very *considerable military force can do it.*"

It is remarkable, Sir, that the persons who formerly trumpeted forth the most loudly, the violent resolutions of assemblies; the universal insurrections; the seizing and burning the stamped papers; the forcing the stamp officers to resign their commissions under the gallows; the rifling and pulling down the houses of magistrates; and the expulsion from their country of all who dared to write or speak a single word in defence of the powers of parliament; these very trumpeters are now the men that represent the whole as a mere trifle; and choose to date all the disturbances from the repeal of the stamp-act, which put an end to them. Hear your officers abroad, and let them refute this shameless falsehood, who, in all their correspondence, state the disturbances as owing to their true causes, the discontent of the people, from the taxes. You have this evidence in your own archives—and it will give you complete satisfaction; if you are not so far lost to all parliamentary ideas of information, as rather to credit the lie of the day, than the records of your own house.

Sir, this vermin of court reporters, when they are forced into day upon one point, are sure to burrow in another; but they shall have no refuge; I will make them bolt out of all their holes. Conscious that they must be baffled, when they attribute a precedent disturbance to a subsequent measure, they take other ground, almost as absurd, but very common in modern practice, and very wicked; which is, to attribute the ill-effect of ill-judged conduct to the arguments which had been used to dissuade us from it. They say, that the opposition made in parliament to the stamp-act at the time of its passing, encouraged the Americans to their resistance. This has even formally appeared in print in a regular volume, from an advocate of that faction, a Dr. Tucker. This Dr. Tucker is already a dean, and his earnest labours in this vineyard will, I suppose, raise him to a bishoprick. But this assertion too, just like the rest, is false. In all the papers which have loaded your table; in all the vast crowd of verbal witnesses that appeared at your bar, witnesses which were indiscriminately produced from both sides of the house; not the least hint of such a cause of disturbance has ever appeared. As to the fact of a strenuous opposition to the stamp-act, I sat as a stranger in your gallery when the act was under consideration. Far from any thing inflammatory, I never heard a more languid debate in this house. No more than two or three gentlemen, as I remember, spoke against the act, and that with great reserve and remarkable temper. There was but one division in the whole progress of the bill; and the minority did not reach to more than 39 or 40. In the house of lords I do not recollect that there was any debate or division at all. I am sure there was no protest. In fact, the affair passed with so very, very little noise, that in town they scarcely knew the nature of what you were doing. The opposition to the bill in England never could have done this mischief, because there scarcely ever was less of opposition to a bill of consequence.

Sir, the agents and distributors of falsehoods have, with their usual industry, circulated another lie of the same nature with the former. It is this, that the disturbances arose from the account which had been received in America of the change in the ministry. No longer awed, it seems, with the spirit of the former rulers, they thought themselves a match for what our calumniators choose to qualify by the name of so feeble a ministry as succeeded. Feeble in one sense these men certainly may be called; for with all their efforts, and they have made many, they have not been able to resist the distempered vigour, and insane alacrity with which you are rushing to your ruin. But it does so happen, that the falsity of this circulation is (like the rest) demonstrated by indisputable dates and records.

So little was the change known in America, that the letters of your governours, giving an account of these disturbances long after they

had arrived at their highest pitch, were all directed to the *old ministry*, and particularly to the *Earl of Halifax*, the secretary of state corresponding with the colonies, without once in the smallest degree intimating the slightest suspicion of any ministerial revolution whatsoever. The ministry was not changed in England until the 10th day of July, 1765. On the 14th of the preceding June, Governour Fauquier from Virginia writes thus; and writes thus to the Earl of Halifax: "*Government is set at* defiance, *not having strength enough in her hands to enforce obedience to the laws of the community. The private distress, which every man feels, increases the* general dissatisfaction *at the duties laid by the* stamp-act, *which breaks out, and shews itself upon every trifling occasion.*" The general dissatisfaction had produced some time before, that is, on the 29th of May, several strong public resolves against the stamp-act; and those resolves are assigned by Governour Bernard, as the cause of the *insurrections* in Massachusett's Bay, in his letter of the 15th of August, still addressed to the Earl of Halifax; and he continued to address such accounts to that minister quite to the 7th of September of the same year. Similar accounts, and of as late a date, were sent from other governours, and all directed to Lord Halifax. Not one of these letters indicates the slightest idea of a change, either known, or even apprehended.

Thus are blown away the insect race of courtly falsehoods! thus perish the miserable inventions of the wretched runners for a wretched cause, which they have fly-blown into every weak and rotten part of the country, in vain hopes that when their maggots had taken wing, their importunate buzzing might sound something like the public voice!

Sir, I have troubled you sufficiently with the state of America before the repeal. Now I turn to the honourable gentleman who so stoutly challenges us, to tell, whether, after the repeal, the provinces were quiet? This is coming home to the point. Here I meet him directly; and answer most readily, *They were quiet.* And I, in my turn, challenge him to prove when, and where, and by whom, and in what numbers, and with what violence, the other laws of trade, as gentlemen assert, were violated in consequence of your concession? or that even your other revenue laws were attacked? but I quit the vantage ground on which I stand, and where I might leave the burthen of the proof upon him: I walk down upon the open plain, and undertake to shew, that they were not only quiet, but shewed many unequivocal marks of acknowledgment and gratitude. And to give him every advantage, I select the obnoxious colony of Massachusett's Bay, which at this time (but without hearing her) is so heavily a culprit before parliament—I will select their proceedings even under circumstances of no small irritation. For, a little imprudently, I must say, Governour Bernard mixed in the administration of the lenitive of the repeal no small acrimony arising from matters of a separate nature. Yet see, Sir, the effect of that lenitive, though mixed with these better ingredients; and how this rugged people can express themselves on a measure of concession.

"*If it is not in our power,*" (say they in their address to Governour Bernard,) "*in so full a manner as will be expected, to shew our respectful gratitude to the mother country, or to make a dutiful and affectionate return to the indulgence of the king and parliament, it shall be no fault of ours; for this we intend, and hope we shall be able fully to effect.*"

Would to God that this temper had been cultivated, managed, and set in action! other effects than those which we have since felt would have resulted from it. On the requisition for compensation to those who had suffered from the violence of the populace, in the same address they say, "*The recommendation enjoined by Mr. Secretary Conway's letter, and in consequence thereof made to us, we will embrace the first convenient opportunity to consider and act upon.*" They did consider; they did act upon it. They obeyed the requisition. I know the mode has been chicaned upon; but it was substantially obeyed; and much better obeyed, than I fear the parliamentary requisition of this session will be, though enforced by all your rigour, and backed with all your power. In a word, the damages of popular fury were compensated by legislative gravity. Almost every other part of America in various ways demonstrated their gratitude. I am bold to say, that so sudden a calm recovered after so violent a storm is without parallel in history. To say that no other disturbance should happen from any other cause, is folly. But as far as appearances went, by the judicious sacrifice of one law, you procured an acquiescence in all that remained. After this experience, nobody shall persuade me, when a whole people are concerned, that acts of lenity are not means of conciliation.

I hope the honourable gentleman has received a fair and full answer to his question.

I have done with the third period of your

policy; that of your repeal; and the return of your ancient system, and your ancient tranquillity and concord. Sir, this period was not as long as it was happy. Another scene was opened, and other actors appeared on the stage. The state, in the condition I have described it, was delivered into the hands of Lord Chatham—a great and celebrated name; a name that keeps the name of this country respectable in every other on the globe. It may be truly called,

Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus, et multum nostra quod proderat urbi.

Sir, the venerable age of this great man, his merited rank, his superiour eloquence, his splendid qualities, his eminent services, the vast space he fills in the eye of mankind; and, more than all the rest, his fall from power, which, like death, canonizes and sanctifies a great character, will not suffer me to censure any part of his conduct. I am afraid to flatter him; I am sure I am not disposed to blame him. Let those who have betrayed him by their adulation, insult him with their malevolence. But what I do not presume to censure, I may have leave to lament. For a wise man, he seemed to me at that time, to be governed too much by general maxims. I speak with the freedom of history, and I hope without offence. One or two of these maxims, flowing from an opinion not the most indulgent to our unhappy species, and surely a little too general, led him into measures that were greatly mischievous to himself; and for that reason, among others, perhaps fatal to his country; measures, the effects of which, I am afraid, are for ever incurable. He made an administration, so checkered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically dove-tailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified Mosaic; such a tesselated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans; whigs and tories; treacherous friends and open enemies: that it was indeed a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, "Sir, your name?—Sir, you have the advantage of me—Mr. Such-a-one—I beg a thousand pardons—." I venture to say, it did so happen, that persons had a single office divided between them, who had never spoke to each other in their lives; until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points, in the same truckle-bed.*

Sir, in consequence of this arrangement, having put so much the larger part of his enemies and opposers into power, the confusion was such, that his own principles could not possibly have any effect or influence in the conduct of affairs. If ever he fell into a fit of the gout, or if any other cause withdrew him from public cares, principles directly the contrary were sure to predominate. When he had executed his plan, he had not an inch of ground to stand upon. When he had accomplished his scheme of administration, he was no longer a minister.

When his face was hid but for a moment, his whole system was on a wide sea, without chart or compass. The gentlemen, his particular friends, who, with the names of various departments of ministry, were admitted, to seem, as if they acted a part under him, with a modesty that becomes all men, and with a confidence in him, which was justified even in its extravagance by his superiour abilities, had never, in any instance, presumed upon any opinion of their own. Deprived of his guiding influence, they were whirled about, the sport of every gust, and easily driven into any port; and as those who joined with them in manning the vessel were the most directly opposite to his opinions, measures, and character, and far the most artful and most powerful of the set, they easily prevailed, so as to seize upon the vacant, unoccupied, and derelict minds of his friends; and instantly they turned the vessel wholly out of the course of his policy. As if it were to insult as well as to betray him, even long before the close of the first session of his administration, when every thing was publicly transacted, and with great parade, in his name, they made an act, declaring it highly just and expedient to raise a revenue in America. For even then, Sir, even before this splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and, for his hour, became lord of the ascendant.

This light too is passed and set for ever. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend, officially the re-producer of this fatal scheme; whom I cannot even now remember without some degree of sensibility.

* Supposed to allude to the Right Honourable Lord North, and George Cooke, Esq. who were made joint paymasters in the summer of 1766, on the removal of the Rockingham administration.

In truth, Sir, he was the delight and ornament of this house, and the charm of every private society which he honoured with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of a more pointed and finished wit; and (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment. If he had not so great a stock, as some have had who flourished formerly, of knowledge long treasured up, he knew better by far, than any man I ever was acquainted with, how to bring together within a short time, all that was necessary to establish, to illustrate, and to decorate that side of the question he supported. He stated his matter skilfully and powerfully. He particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation, and display of his subject. His style of argument was neither trite and vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the house just between wind and water.—And not being troubled with too anxious a zeal for any matter in question, he was never more tedious, nor more earnest, than the preconceived opinions, and present temper of his hearers required; to whom he was always in perfect unison. He conformed exactly to the temper of the house; and he seemed to guide, because he was always sure to follow it.

I beg pardon, Sir, if, when I speak of this and of other great men, I appear to digress in saying something of their characters. In this eventful history of the revolutions of America, the characters of such men are of much importance. Great men are the guide-posts and land-marks in the state. The credit of such men at court, or in the nation, is the sole cause of all the public measures. It would be an invidious thing, (most foreign, I trust, to what you think my disposition,) to remark the errours into which the authority of great names has brought the nation, without doing justice at the same time to the great qualities, whence that authority arose. The subject is instructive, to those who wish to form themselves on whatever of excellence has gone before them. There are many young members in the house (such of late has been the rapid succession of public men) who never saw that prodigy Charles Townshend; nor of course know what a ferment he was able to excite in every thing by the violent ebullition of his mixed virtues and failings. For failings he had undoubtedly—many of us remember them; we are this day considering the effect of them. But he had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause; to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immoderate passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls. He worshipped that goddess wheresoever she appeared; but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favourite habitation, in her chosen temple, the house of commons. Besides the characters of the individuals that compose our body, it is impossible, Mr. Speaker, not to observe, that this house has a collective character of its own. That character too, however imperfect, is not unamiable. Like all great public collections of men, you possess a marked love of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice. But among vices, there is none, which the house abhors in the same degree with *obstinacy*. Obstinacy, Sir, is certainly a great vice; and in the changeful state of political affairs it is frequently the cause of great mischief. It happens, however, very unfortunately, that almost the whole line of the great and masculine virtues, constancy, gravity, magnanimity, fortitude, fidelity, and firmness, are closely allied to this disagreeable quality, of which you have so just an abhorrence; and in their excess, all these virtues very easily fall into it. He, who paid such a punctilious attention to all your feelings, certainly took care not to shock them by that vice which is the most disgustful to you.

That fear of displeasing those who ought most to be pleased, betrayed him sometimes into the other extreme. He had voted, and in the year 1765, had been an advocate for the stamp-act. Things and the disposition of men's minds were changed. In short, the stamp-act began to be no favourite in this house. He therefore attended at the private meeting, in which the resolutions moved by a right honourable gentleman were settled; resolutions leading to the repeal. The next day he voted for that repeal; and he would have spoken for it too, if an illness, (not as was then given out, a political,) but to my knowledge, a very real illness, had not prevented it.

The very next session, as the fashion of this world passeth away, the repeal began to be in as bad an odour in this house as the stamp-act had been in the session before. To conform to the temper which began to prevail, and to prevail mostly among those most in power, he declared, very early in the winter, that a revenue must be had out of America. Instantly he was tied down to his engagements by some, who had no objection to such experiments, when made at the cost of persons for whom they had no particular regard. The whole body of courtiers drove him onward. They always talked as if the king stood in a sort of humiliated state, until something of the kind should be done.

Here this extraordinary man, then chancel-

lor of the exchequer, found himself in great straits. To please universally was the object of his life; but to tax and to please, no more than to love and to be wise, is not given to men. However he attempted it. To render the tax palatable to the partisans of American revenue, he made a preamble stating the necessity of such a revenue. To close with the American distinction, this revenue was *external* or port-duty; but again, to soften it to the other party, it was a duty of *supply*. To gratify the *colonists*, it was laid on British manufactures; to satisfy the *merchants of Britain*, the duty was trivial, and (except that on tea, which touched only the devoted East India company) on none of the grand objects of commerce. To counterwork the American contraband, the duty on tea was reduced from a shilling to three-pence. But to secure the favour of those who would tax America, the scene of collection was changed, and, with the rest, it was levied in the colonies. What need I say more? This fine-spun scheme had the usual fate of all exquisite policy. But the original plan of the duties, and the mode of executing that plan, both arose singly and solely from a love of our applause. He was truly the child of the house. He never thought, did, or said any thing, but with a view to you. He every day adapted himself to your disposition; and adjusted himself before it as at a looking-glass.

He had observed (indeed it could not escape him) that several persons, infinitely his inferiours in all respects, had formerly rendered themselves considerable in this house by one method alone. They were a race of men, (I hope in God the species is extinct,) who, when they rose in their place, no man living could divine, from any known adherence to parties, to opinions, or to principles; from any order or system in their politics; or from any sequel or connection in their ideas, what part they were going to take in any debate. It is astonishing how much this uncertainty, especially at critical times, called the attention of all parties on such men. All eyes were fixed on them, all ears open to hear them; each party gaped, and looked alternately for their vote, almost to the end of their speeches. While the house hung in this uncertainty, now the *hear-hims* rose from this side—now they rebellowed from the other; and that party to whom they fell at length from their tremulous and dancing balance, always received them in a tempest of applause. The fortune of such men was a temptation too great to be resisted by one, to whom, a single whiff of incense withheld gave much greater pain, than he received delight, in the clouds of it, which daily rose about him from the prodigal superstition of innumerable admirers. He was a candidate for contradictory honours; and his great aim was to make those agree in admiration of him who never agreed in any thing else.

Hence arose this unfortunate act, the subject of this day's debate; from a disposition which, after making an American revenue to please one, repealed it to please others, and again revived it in hopes of pleasing a third, and of catching something in the ideas of all.

This revenue act of 1767, formed the fourth period of American policy. How we have fared since then—what woful variety of schemes have been adopted; what enforcing, and what repealing; what bullying, and what submitting; what doing, and undoing; what straining, and what relaxing; what assemblies dissolved for not obeying, and called again without obedience; what troops sent out to quell resistance, and on meeting that resistance, recalled; what shiftings, and changes, and jumblings of all kinds of men at home, which left no possibility of order, consistency, vigour, or even so much as a decent unity of colour in any one public measure.—It is a tedious, irksome task. My duty may call me to open it out some other time;* on a former occasion I tried your temper on a part of it; for the present I shall forbear.

After all these changes and agitations, your immediate situation upon the question on your paper is at length brought to this. You have an act of parliament, stating, that "it is *expedient* to raise a revenue in America." By a partial repeal you annihilated the greatest part of that revenue, which this preamble declares to be so expedient. You have substituted no other in the place of it. A secretary of state has disclaimed, in the king's name, all thoughts of such a substitution in future. The principle of this disclaimer goes to what has been left, as well as what has been repealed. The tax which lingers after its companions, (under a preamble declaring an American revenue expedient, and for the sole purpose of supporting the theory of that preamble,) militates with the assurance authentically conveyed to the colonies; and is an exhaustless source of jealousy and animosity. On this state, which I take to be a fair one; not being able to discern any grounds of honour, advantage, peace, or power, for adhering, either to the act or to the preamble, I shall vote for the question which leads to the repeal of both.

If you do not fall in with this motion, then

* Resolutions in May 1770.

secure something to fight for, consistent in theory and valuable in practice. If you must employ your strength, employ it to uphold you in some honourable right, or some profitable wrong. If you are apprehensive that the concession recommended to you, though proper, should be a means of drawing on you further but unreasonable claims,—why then employ your force in supporting that reasonable concession against those unreasonable demands. You will employ it with more grace; with better effect; and with great probable concurrence of all the quiet and rational people in the provinces; who are now united with, and hurried away by, the violent; having indeed different dispositions, but a common interest. If you apprehend that on a concession you shall be pushed by metaphysical process to the extreme lines, and argued out of your whole authority, my advice is this; when you have recovered your old, your strong, your tenable position, then face about—stop short—do nothing more—reason not at all—oppose the ancient policy and practice of the empire, as a rampart against the speculations of innovators on both sides of the question; and you will stand on great, manly, and sure ground. On this solid basis fix your machines, and they will draw worlds towards you.

Your ministers, in their own and his majesty's name, have already adopted the American distinction of internal and external duties. It is a distinction, whatever merit it may have, that was originally moved by the Americans themselves; and I think they will acquiesce in it, if they are not pushed with too much logic and too little sense, in all the consequences. That is, if external taxation be understood, as they and you understand it, when you please, to be not a distinction of geography, but of policy; that it is a power for regulating trade, and not for supporting establishments. The distinction, which is as nothing with regard to right, is of most weighty consideration in practice. Recover your old ground, and your old tranquillity—try it—I am persuaded the Americans will compromise with you. When confidence is once restored, the odious and suspicious *summum jus* will perish of course. The spirit of practicability, of moderation, and mutual convenience, will never call in geometrical exactness as the arbitrator of an amicable settlement. Consult and follow your experience. Let not the long story with which I have exercised your patience, prove fruitless to your interests.

For my part, I should choose (if I could have my wish) that the proposition of the honourable gentleman* for the repeal, could go to America without the attendance of the penal bills. Alone I could almost answer for its success. I cannot be certain of its reception in the bad company it may keep. In such heterogeneous assortments, the most innocent person will lose the effect of his innocency. Though you should send out this angel of peace, yet you are sending out a destroying angel too; and what would be the effect of the conflict of these two adverse spirits, or which would predominate in the end, is what I dare not say: whether the lenient measures would cause American passion to subside, or the severe would increase its fury—All this is in the hand of Providence; yet now, even now, I should confide in the prevailing virtue, and efficacious operation of lenity, though working in darkness, and in chaos, in the midst of all this unnatural and turbid combination. I should hope it might produce order and beauty in the end.

Let us, Sir, embrace some system or other before we end this session. Do you mean to tax America, and to draw a productive revenue from thence? If you do, speak out: name, fix, ascertain this revenue; settle its quantity; define its objects; provide for its collection; and then fight when you have something to fight for. If you murder—rob; if you kill, take possession: and do not appear in the character of madmen, as well as assassins, violent, vindictive, bloody, and tyrannical, without an object. But may better counsels guide you!

Again, and again, revert to your old principles—seek peace and ensure it—leave America, if she has taxable matter in her, to tax herself. I am not here going into the distinctions of rights, nor attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them. Leave the Americans as they anciently stood, and these distinctions, born of our unhappy contest, will die along with it. They and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. Let the memory of all actions, in contradiction to that good old mode, on both sides, be extinguished for ever. Be content to bind America by laws of trade; you have always done it. Let this be your reason for binding their trade. Do not burthen them by taxes; you were not used to do so from the beginning. Let this be your reason for not taxing. These are the arguments of states and kingdoms. Leave the rest to the schools; for there only they may be discussed with safety. But if, intemperately, unwisely, fatally, you

* Mr. Fuller.

sophisticate and poison the very source of government, by urging subtle deductions, and consequences odious to those you govern, from the unlimited and illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty, you will teach them by these means to call that sovereignty itself in question. When you drive him hard, the boar will surely turn upon the hunters. If that sovereignty and their freedom cannot be reconciled, which will they take? They will cast your sovereignty in your face. No body will be argued into slavery. Sir, let the gentlemen on the other side call forth all their ability; let the best of them get up, and tell me, what one character of liberty the Americans have, and what one brand of slavery they are free from, if they are bound in their property and industry, by all the restraints you can imagine on commerce, and at the same time are made packhorses of every tax you choose to impose, without the least share in granting them. When they bear the burthens of unlimited monopoly, will you bring them to bear the burthens of unlimited revenue too? The Englishman in America will feel that this is slavery—that it is *legal* slavery, will be no compensation, either to his feelings or his understanding.

A noble lord,* who spoke some time ago, is full of the fire of ingenuous youth; and when he has modelled the ideas of a lively imagination by further experience, he will be an ornament to his country in either house. He has said, that the Americans are our children, and how can they revolt against their parent? He says, that if they are not free in their present state, England is not free; because Manchester, and other considerable places, are not represented. So then, because some towns in England are not represented, America is to have no representative at all. They are "our children;" but when children ask for bread, we are not to give a stone. Is it because the natural resistance of things, and the various mutations of time, hinders our government, or any scheme of government, from being any more than a sort of approximation to the right, is it therefore that the colonies are to recede from it infinitely? When this child of ours wishes to assimilate to its parent, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beauteous countenance of British liberty; are we to turn to them the shameful parts of our constitution? are we to give them our weakness for their strength? our opprobrium for their glory; and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for their freedom?

If this be the case, ask yourselves this question, Will they be content in such a state of slavery? If not, look to the consequences. Reflect how you are to govern a people, who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you begun; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found, to—my voice fails me; my inclination indeed carries me no further—all is confusion beyond it.

Well, Sir, I have recovered a little, and before I sit down I must say something to another point with which gentlemen urge us. What is to become of the declaratory act asserting the entireness of British legislative authority, if we abandon the practice of taxation?

For my part I look upon the rights stated in that act, exactly in the manner in which I viewed them on its very first proposition, and which I have often taken the liberty, with great humility, to lay before you. I look, I say, on the imperial rights of Great Britain, and the privileges which the colonists ought to enjoy under these rights, to be just the most reconcileable things in the world. The parliament of Great Britain sits at the head of her extensive empire in two capacities: one as the local legislature of this island, providing for all things at home, immediately, and by no other instrument than the executive power.—The other, and I think her nobler capacity, is what I call her *imperial character*; in which, as from the throne of heaven, she superintends all the several inferiour legislatures, and guides, and controuls them all without annihilating any. As all these provincial legislatures are only co-ordinate to each other, they ought all to be subordinate to her; else they can neither preserve mutual peace, nor hope for mutual justice, nor effectually afford mutual assistance. It is necessary to coerce the negligent, to restrain the violent, and to aid the weak and deficient, by the overruling plenitude of her power. She is never to intrude into the place of the others, whilst they are equal to the common ends of their institution. But in order to enable parliament to answer all these ends of provident and beneficent superintendence, her powers must be boundless. The gentlemen who think the powers of parliament limited, may please themselves to talk of requisitions.

* Lord Carmarthen.

But suppose the requisitions are not obeyed? What! Shall there be no reserved power in the empire, to supply a deficiency which may weaken, divide, and dissipate the whole? We are engaged in war—the secretary of state calls upon the colonies to contribute—some would do it, I think most would cheerfully furnish whatever is demanded—one or two, suppose, hang back, and, easing themselves, let the stress of the draft lie on the others—surely it is proper, that some authority might legally say—"Tax yourselves for the common supply, or parliament will do it for you." This backwardness was, as I am told, actually the case of Pennsylvania for some short time towards the beginning of the last war, owing to some internal dissensions in the colony. But, whether the fact were so, or otherwise, the case is equally to be provided for by a competent sovereign power. But then this ought to be no ordinary power; nor ever used in the first instance. This is what I meant, when I have said at various times, that I consider the power of taxing in parliament as an instrument of empire, and not as a means of supply.

Such, Sir, is my idea of the constitution of the British empire, as distinguished from the constitution of Britain; and on these grounds I think subordination and liberty may be sufficiently reconciled through the whole; whether to serve a refining speculatist, or a factious demagogue, I know not; but enough surely for the ease and happiness of man.

Sir, whilst we held this happy course, we drew more from the colonies than all the impotent violence of despotism ever could extort from them. We did this abundantly in the last war. It has never been once denied—and what reason have we to imagine that the colonies would not have proceeded in supplying government as liberally, if you had not stepped in and hindered them from contributing, by interrupting the channel in which their liberality flowed with so strong a course; by attempting to take, instead of being satisfied to receive? Sir William Temple says, that Holland has loaded itself with ten times the impositions which it revolted from Spain, rather than submit to. He says true. Tyranny is a poor provider. It knows neither how to accumulate, nor how to extract.

I charge therefore to this new and unfortunate system the loss not only of peace, of union, and of commerce, but even of revenue, which its friends are contending for.—It is morally certain, that we have lost at least a million of free grants since the peace. I think we have lost a great deal more; and that those who look for a revenue from the provinces, never could have pursued, even in that light, a course more directly repugnant to their purposes.

Now, Sir, I trust I have shewn, first on that narrow ground which the honourable gentleman measured, that you are like to lose nothing by complying with the motion, except what you have lost already. I have shewn afterwards, that in time of peace you flourished in commerce, and when war required it, had sufficient aid from the colonies, while you pursued your ancient policy; that you threw every thing into confusion when you made the stamp act; and that you restored every thing to peace and order when you repealed it. I have shewn that the revival of the system of taxation has produced the very worst effects; and that the partial repeal has produced, not partial good, but universal evil. Let these considerations, founded on facts, not one of which can be denied, bring us back to our reason by the road of our experience.

I cannot, as I have said, answer for mixed measures; but surely this mixture of lenity would give the whole a better chance of success. When you once regain confidence, the way will be clear before you. Then you may enforce the act of navigation when it ought to be enforced. You will yourselves open it where it ought still further to be opened. Proceed in what you do, whatever you do, from policy, and not from rancour. Let us act like men, let us act like statesmen. Let us hold some sort of consistent conduct.—It is agreed that a revenue is not to be had in America. If we lose the profit, let us get rid of the odium.

On this business of America, I confess I am serious, even to sadness. I have had but one opinion concerning it since I sat, and before I sat in parliament. The noble lord* will, as usual, probably, attribute the part taken by me and my friends in this business, to a desire of getting his places. Let him enjoy this happy and original idea. If I deprived him of it, I should take away most of his wit, and all his argument. But I had rather bear the brunt of all his wit; and indeed blows much heavier, than stand answerable to God for embracing a system that tends to the destruction of some of the very best and fairest of his works. But I know the map of England, as well as the noble

* Lord North.

lord, or as any other person; and I know that the way I take is not the road to preferment. My excellent and honourable friend under me on the floor,* has trod that road with great toil for upwards of twenty years together. He is not yet arrived at the noble lord's destination. However, the tracks of my worthy friend are those I have ever wished to follow; because I know they lead to honour. Long may we tread the same road together; whoever may accompany us, or whoever may laugh at us on our journey! I honestly and solemnly declare, I have in all seasons adhered to the system of 1766, for no other reason, than that I think it laid deep in your truest interests—and that, by limiting the exercise, it fixes on the firmest foundations, a real, consistent, well-grounded authority in parliament. Until you come back to that system, there will be no peace for England.

* Mr. Dowdeswell.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECHES

ON HIS ARRIVAL AT BRISTOL, AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE POLL. 1774.

EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

We believe there is no need of an apology to the public for offering to them any genuine speeches of Mr. Burke: the two contained in this publication undoubtedly are so. The general approbation they met with (as we hear) from all parties at Bristol, persuades us that a good edition of them will not be unacceptable in London; which we own to be the inducement, and we hope is a justification of our offering it.

We do not presume to descant on the merit of these Speeches; but as it is no less new, than honourable, to find a popular candidate, at a popular election, daring to avow his dissent to certain points that have been considered as very popular objects, and maintaining himself on the manly confidence of his own opinion; so, we must say, that it does great credit to the people of England, as it proves to the world, that, to insure their confidence, it is not necessary to flatter them, or to affect a subserviency to their passions or their prejudices.

It may be necessary to premise, that at the opening of the poll the candidates were Lord Clare, Mr. Brickdale, the two last members; and Mr. Cruger, a considerable merchant at Bristol. On the second day of the poll Lord Clare declined; and a considerable body of gentlemen, who had wished that the city of Bristol should, at this critical season, be represented by some gentleman of tried abilities and known commercial knowledge, immediately put Mr. Burke in nomination. Some of them set off express for London to apprise that gentleman of this event; but he was gone to Malton in Yorkshire. The spirit and active zeal of these gentlemen followed him to Malton. They arrived there just after Mr. Burke's election for that place, and invited him to Bristol.

Mr. Burke, as he tells us in his first Speech, acquainted his constituents with the honourable offer that was made him; and, with their consent, he immediately set off for Bristol on the Tuesday at six in the evening; he arrived at Bristol at half past two in the afternoon on Thursday the 13th of October, being the sixth day of the poll.

He drove directly to the mayor's house, who not being at home, he proceeded to the Guildhall, where he ascended the hustings, and having saluted the electors, the sheriffs, and the two candidates, he reposed himself for a few minutes, and then addressed the electors in a speech which was received with great and universal applause and approbation.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH ON HIS ARRIVAL AT BRISTOL.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM come hither to solicit in person, that favour which my friends have hitherto endeavoured to procure for me, by the most obliging, and to me the most honourable, exertions.

I have so high an opinion of the great trust which you have to confer on this occasion; and, by long experience, so just a diffidence in my abilities, to fill it in a manner adequate even to my own ideas, that I should never have ventured of myself to intrude into that awful situation. But since I am called upon by the desire of several respectable fellow-subjects, as I have done at other times, I give up my fears to their wishes. Whatever my other deficiencies may be, I do not know what it is to be wanting to my friends.

I am not fond of attempting to raise public expectations by great promises. At this time, there is much cause to consider, and very little to presume. We seem to be approaching to a great crisis in our affairs, which calls for the whole wisdom of the wisest among us, without being able to assure ourselves, that any wisdom can preserve us from many and great inconveniences. You know I speak of our unhappy contest with America. I confess, it is a matter on which I look down as from a precipice. It is difficult in itself, and it is rendered more intricate by a great variety of plans of conduct. I do not mean to enter into them. I will not suspect a want of good intention in framing them. But however pure the intentions of their authors may have been, we all know that the event has been unfortunate. The means of recovering our affairs are not obvious. So many great questions of commerce, of finance, of constitution, and of policy, are involved in this American deliberation, that I dare engage for nothing, but that I shall give it, without any predilection to former opinions, or any sinister bias whatsoever, the most honest and impartial consideration of which I am capable. The public has a full right to it; and this great city, a main pillar in the commercial interest of Great Britain, must totter on its base by the slightest mistake with regard to our American measures.

Thus much, however, I think it not amiss to lay before you; That I am not, I hope, apt to take up or lay down my opinions lightly. I have held, and ever shall maintain, to the best of my power, unimpaired and undiminished, the just, wise, and necessary constitutional superiority of Great Britain. This is necessary for America, as well as for us. I never mean to depart from it, whatever may be lost by it. I avow it. The forfeiture even of your favour, if by such a declaration I could forfeit it, though the first object of my ambition, never will make me disguise my sentiments on this subject.

But,—I have ever had a clear opinion, and have ever held a constant corresponding conduct, that this superiority is consistent with all the liberties a sober and spirited American ought to desire. I never mean to put any colonist, or any human creature, in a situation, not becoming a free-man. To reconcile British superiority with American liberty shall be my great object, as far as my little faculties extend. I am far from thinking that both, even yet, may not be preserved.

When I first devoted myself to the public service, I considered how I should render myself fit for it; and this I did by endeavouring to discover what it was, that gave this country the rank it holds in the world. I found that our prosperity and dignity arose principally, if not solely, from two sources; our constitution and commerce. Both these I have spared no study to understand, and no endeavour to support.

The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate, seems the particular duty and proper trust of a member of the House of Commons. But the liberty, the only liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with order; that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government, as in its substance and vital principle.

The other source of our power is commerce, of which you are so large a part, and which cannot exist, no more than your liberty, without a connection with many virtues. It has ever been a very particular and a very favourite object of my study, in its principles, and in its details. I think many here are acquainted with the truth of what I say. This I know, that I have ever had my house open, and my poor services ready, for traders and manufacturers of every denomination. My favourite ambition is to have those services acknowledged. I now appear before you to make trial, whether my earnest endeavours have been so wholly oppressed by the weakness of my abilities, as to be rendered insignificant in the eyes of a great trading city; or whether you chuse to give a weight to humble abilities, for the sake of the honest exertions with which they are accompanied. This is my trial to-day. My industry is not on trial. Of my industry I am

sure, as far as my constitution of mind and body admitted.

When I was invited by many respectable merchants, freeholders, and freemen of this city, to offer them my services, I had just received the honour of an election at another place, at a very great distance from this. I immediately opened the matter to those of my worthy constituents who were with me, and they unanimously advised me not to decline it. They told me, that they had elected me with a view to the public service; and as great questions relative to our commerce and colonies were imminent, that in such matters I might derive authority and support from the representation of this great commercial city; they desired me therefore to set off without delay, very well persuaded that I never could forget my obligations to them, or to my friends, for the choice they had made of me. From that time to this instant I have not slept; and if I should have the honour of being freely chosen by you, I hope I shall be as far from slumbering or sleeping when your service requires me to be awake, as I have been in coming to offer myself a candidate for your favour.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH TO THE ELECTORS OF BRISTOL, ON HIS BEING DECLARED BY THE SHERIFFS, DULY ELECTED ONE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT FOR THAT CITY, ON THURSDAY THE THIRD OF NOVEMBER, 1774.

GENTLEMEN,

I CANNOT avoid sympathizing strongly with the feelings of the gentleman who has received the same honour that you have conferred on me. If he, who was bred and passed his whole life among you; if he, who through the easy gradations of acquaintance, friendship, and esteem, has obtained the honour, which seems of itself, naturally and almost insensibly, to meet with those, who, by the even tenour of pleasing manners and social virtues, slide into the love and confidence of their fellow-citizens;—if he cannot speak but with great emotion on this subject, surrounded as he is on all sides with his old friends; you will have the goodness to excuse me, if my real, unaffected embarrassment prevents me from expressing my gratitude to you as I ought.

I was brought hither under the disadvantage of being unknown, even by sight, to any of you. No previous canvass was made for me. I was put in nomination after the poll was opened. I did not appear until it was far advanced. If, under all these accumulated disadvantages, your good opinion has carried me to this happy point of success; you will pardon me, if I can only say to you collectively, as I said to you individually, simply and plainly, I thank you—I am obliged to you—I am not insensible of your kindness.

This is all that I am able to say for the inestimable favour you have conferred upon me. But I cannot be satisfied, without saying a little more in defence of the right you have to confer such a favour. The person that appeared here as counsel for the candidate, who so long and so earnestly solicited your votes, thinks proper to deny, that a very great part of you have any votes to give. He fixes a standard period of time in his own imagination, not what the law defines, but merely what the convenience of his client suggests, by which he would cut off, at one stroke, all those freedoms, which are the dearest privileges of your corporation; which the common law authorizes; which your magistrates are compelled to grant; which come duly authenticated into this court; and are saved in the clearest words, and with the most religious care and tenderness, in that very act of parliament, which was made to regulate the elections by freemen, and to prevent all possible abuses in making them.

I do not intend to argue the matter here. My learned counsel has supported your cause with his usual ability; the worthy sheriffs have acted with their usual equity, and I have no doubt, that the same equity, which dictates the return, will guide the final determination. I had the honour, in conjunction with many far wiser men, to contribute a very small assistance, but however some assistance, to the forming the judicature which is to try such questions. It would be unnatural in me, to doubt the justice of that court, in the trial of my own cause, to which I have been so active, to give jurisdiction over every other.

I assure the worthy freemen, and this corporation, that, if the gentleman perseveres in the intentions, which his present warmth dictates to him, I will attend their cause with diligence, and I hope with effect. For, if I know any thing of myself, it is not my own interest in it, but my full conviction, that induces me to tell you—*I think there is not a shadow of doubt in the case.*

I do not imagine that you find me rash in declaring myself, or very forward in troubling you. From the beginning to the end of the

election, I have kept silence in all matters of discussion. I have never asked a question of a voter on the other side, or supported a doubtful vote on my own. I respected the abilities of my managers; I relied on the candour of the court. I think the worthy sheriffs will bear me witness, that I have never once made an attempt to impose upon their reason, to surprise their justice, or to ruffle their temper. I stood on the hustings (except when I gave my thanks to those who favoured me with their votes) less like a candidate, than an unconcerned spectator of a public proceeding. But here the face of things is altered. Here is an attempt for a general *massacre* of suffrages; an attempt, by a promiscuous carnage of *friends* and *foes*, to exterminate above two thousand votes, including *seven hundred polled for the gentleman himself, who now complains*, and who would, destroy the friends whom he has obtained, only because he cannot obtain as many of them as he wishes.

How he will be permitted, in another place, to stultify and disable himself, and to plead against his own acts, is another question. The law will decide it. I shall only speak of it as it concerns the propriety of public conduct in this city. I do not pretend to lay down rules of decorum for other gentlemen. They are best judges of the mode of proceeding that will recommend them to the favour of their fellow-citizens. But I confess, I should look rather awkward, if I had been the *very first to produce the new copies of freedom*, if I had persisted in producing them to the last; if I had ransacked, with the most unremitting industry, and the most penetrating research, the remotest corners of the kingdom to discover them; if I were then, all at once, to turn short, and declare, that I had been sporting all this while with the right of election; and that I had been drawing out a poll, upon no sort of rational grounds, which disturbed the peace of my fellow-citizens for a month together—I really, for my part, should appear awkward under such circumstances.

It would be still more awkward in me, if I were gravely to look the sheriffs in the face, and to tell them, they were not to determine my cause on my own principles; nor to make the return upon those votes, upon which I had rested my election. Such would be my appearance to the court and magistrates.

But how should I appear to the *voters* themselves? If I had gone round to the citizens entitled to freedom, and squeezed them by the hand—"Sir, I humbly beg your vote—I shall *be eternally* thankful—may I hope for the honour of your support?—Well!—come—we shall see you at the council-house."—If I were then to deliver them to my managers, pack them into tallies, vote them off in court, and when I heard from the bar—"Such a one only! and such a one for ever!—he 's my man!"—"Thank you, good Sir—Hah! my worthy friend! thank you kindly—that 's an honest fellow—how is your good family?"—Whilst these words were hardly out of my mouth, if I should have wheeled round at once, and told them—"Get you gone, you pack of worthless fellows! you have no votes—you are usurpers! you are intruders on the rights of real freemen! I will have nothing to do with you! you ought never to have been produced at this election, and the sheriffs ought not to have admitted you to poll."

Gentlemen, I should make a strange figure, if my conduct had been of this sort. I am not so old an acquaintance of yours as the worthy gentleman. Indeed I could not have ventured on such kind of freedoms with you. But I am bound, and I will endeavour, to have justice done to the rights of freemen; even though I should, at the same time, be obliged to vindicate the former* part of my antagonist's conduct against his own present inclinations.

I owe myself, in all things, to *all* the freemen of this city. My particular friends have a demand on me, that I should not deceive their expectations. Never was cause or man supported with more constancy, more activity, more spirit. I have been supported with a zeal indeed and heartiness in my friends, which (if their object had been at all proportioned to their endeavours) could never be sufficiently commended. They supported me upon the most liberal principles. They wished that the members for Bristol should be chosen for the city, and for their country at large, and not for themselves.

So far they are not disappointed. If I possess nothing else, I am sure I possess the temper that is fit for your service. I know nothing of Bristol, but by the favours I have received, and the virtues I have seen exerted in it.

I shall ever retain, what I now feel, the most perfect and grateful attachment to my friends—and I have no enmities; no resentment. I never can consider fidelity to engagements, and constancy in friendships, but with the highest approbation; even when those noble qualities are employed against my own pre-

* Mr. Brickdale opened his poll, it seems, with a tally of those very kind of freemen, and voted many hundreds of them.

tensions. The gentleman, who is not fortunate as I have been in this contest, enjoys, in this respect, a consolation full of honour both to himself and to his friends. They have certainly left nothing undone for his service.

As for the trifling petulance, which the rage of party stirs up in little minds, though it should shew itself even in this court, it has not made the slightest impression on me. The highest flight of such clamorous birds is winged in an inferiour region of the air. We hear them, and we look upon them, just as you, gentlemen, when you enjoy the serene air on your lofty rocks, look down upon the gulls, that skim the mud of your river, when it is exhausted of its tide.

I am sorry I cannot conclude, without saying a word on a topic touched upon by my worthy colleague. I wish that topic had been passed by; at a time when I have so little leisure to discuss it. But since he has thought proper to throw it out, I owe you a clear explanation of my poor sentiments on that subject.

He tells you, that "the topic of instructions has occasioned much altercation and uneasiness in this city;" and he expresses himself (if I understand him rightly) in favour of the coercive authority of such instructions.

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative, to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion high respect; their business unremitted attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and, above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But, his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you; to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

My worthy colleague says, his will ought to be subservient to yours. If that be all, the thing is innocent. If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superiour. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and, what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion; in which one set of men deliberate, and another decide; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments?

To deliver an opinion, is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But *authoritative* instructions; *mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience; these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenour of our constitution.

Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You chuse a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*. If the local constituent should have an interest, or should form an hasty opinion, evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far, as any other, from any endeavour to give it effect. I beg pardon for saying so much on this subject. I have been unwillingly drawn into it; but I shall ever use a respectful frankness of communication with you. Your faithful friend, your devoted servant, I shall be to the end of my life: a flatterer you do not wish for. On this point of instructions, however, I think it scarcely possible, we ever can have any sort of difference. Perhaps I may give you too much, rather than too little trouble.

From the first hour I was encouraged to court your favour to this happy day of obtaining it, I have never promised you any thing, but humble and persevering endeavours to do my duty. The weight of that duty, I confess, makes me tremble; and whoever well considers what it is, of all things in the world, will fly from what has the least likeness to a positive and precipitate engagement. To be a good member of parliament, is, let me tell you, no easy task; especially at this time, when there is so strong a disposition to run into the perilous extremes of servile compliance or wild popularity. To unite circumspection with vigour, is absolutely necessary; but it is

extremely difficult. We are now members for a rich commercial *city*; this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial *nation*, the interests of which are various, multiform, and intricate. We are members for that great nation, which, however, is itself but part of a great *empire*, extended by our virtue and our fortune, to the farthest limits of the east and of the west. All these wide-spread interests must be considered; must be compared; must be reconciled if possible. We are members for a *free* country; and surely we all know, that the machine of a free constitution is no simple thing; but as intricate and as delicate as it is valuable. We are members in a great and ancient *monarchy*; and we must preserve religiously, the true legal rights of the sovereign, which form the key-stone that binds together the noble and well-constructed arch of our empire and our constitution. A constitution made up of balanced powers must ever be a critical thing. As such I mean to touch that part of it which comes within my reach. I know my inability, and I wish for support from every quarter. In particular, I shall aim at the friendship, and shall cultivate the best correspondence, of the worthy colleague you have given me.

I trouble you no farther than once more to thank you all; you, gentlemen, for your favours; the candidates, for their temperate and polite behaviour; and the sheriffs, for a conduct which may give a model for all who are in public stations.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

ON MOVING HIS RESOLUTIONS FOR CONCILIATION WITH THE COLONIES, MARCH 22, 1775.

I HOPE, Sir, that notwithstanding the austerity of the chair, your good-nature will incline you to some degree of indulgence towards human frailty. You will not think it unnatural, that those who have an object depending, which strongly engages their hopes and fears, should be somewhat inclined to superstition. As I came into the house full of anxiety about the event of my motion, I found to my infinite surprise, that the grand penal Bill, by which we had passed sentence on the trade and sustenance of America, is to be returned to us from the other house.* I do confess, I could not help looking on this event as a fortunate omen. I look upon it as a sort of providential favour; by which we are put once more in possession of our deliberative capacity, upon a business so very questionable in its nature, so very uncertain in its issue. By the return of this Bill, which seemed to have taken its flight for ever, we are at this very instant nearly as free to choose a plan for our American government, as we were on the first day of the session. If, Sir, we incline to the side of conciliation, we are not at all embarrassed (unless we please to make ourselves so) by any incongruous mixture of coercion and restraint. We are therefore called upon, as it were by a superiour warning voice, again to attend to America; to attend to the whole of it together; and to review the subject with an unusual degree of care and calmness.

Surely it is an awful subject; or there is none so on this side of the grave. When I first had the honour of a seat in this house, the affairs of that continent pressed themselves upon us, as the most important and most delicate object of parliamentary attention. My little share in this great deliberation oppressed me. I found myself a partaker in a very high trust; and having no sort of reason to rely on the strength of my natural abilities for the proper execution of that trust, I was obliged to take more than common pains, to instruct myself in every thing which relates to our colonies. I was not less under the necessity of forming some fixed

* The Act to restrain the trade and commerce of the provinces of Massachusetts-Bay and New Hampshire, and colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and Providence Plantation, in North America, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Islands in the West Indies; and to prohibit such provinces and colonies from carrying on any fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, and other places therein mentioned, under *certain conditions* and limitations.

ideas, concerning the general policy of the British empire. Something of this sort seemed to be indispensable; in order, amid so vast a fluctuation of passions and opinions, to concenter my thoughts; to ballast my conduct; to preserve me from being blown about by every wind of fashionable doctrine. I really did not think it safe, or manly, to have fresh principles to seek upon every fresh mail which should arrive from America.

At that period, I had the fortune to find myself in perfect concurrence with a large majority in this house. Bowing under that high authority, and penetrated with the sharpness and strength of that early impression, I have continued ever since, without the least deviation in my original sentiments. Whether this be owing to an obstinate perseverance in errour, or to a religious adherence to what appears to me truth and reason, it is in your equity to judge.

Sir, Parliament having an enlarged view of objects, made, during this interval, more frequent changes in their sentiments and their conduct, than could be justified in a particular person upon the contracted scale of private information. But though I do not hazard any thing approaching to a censure on the motives of former parliaments to all those alterations, one fact is undoubted; that under them the state of America has been kept in continual agitation. Every thing administered as remedy to the public complaint, if it did not produce, was at least followed by, an heightening of the distemper; until, by a variety of experiments, that important country has been brought into her present situation;—a situation which I will not miscall, which I dare not name; which I scarcely know how to comprehend in the terms of any description.

In this posture, Sir, things stood at the beginning of the session. About that time, a worthy member* of great parliamentary experience, who, in the year 1766, filled the chair of the American committee with much ability, took me aside; and, lamenting the present aspect of our politics, told me, things were come to such a pass, that our former methods of proceeding in the house would be no longer tolerated. That the public tribunal (never too indulgent to a long and unsuccessful opposition) would now scrutinize our conduct with unusual severity. That the very vicissitudes and shiftings of ministerial measures, instead of convicting their authors of inconstancy and want of system, would be taken as an occasion of charging us with a predetermined discontent, which nothing could satisfy; whilst we accused every measure of vigour as cruel, and every proposal of lenity as weak and irresolute. The public, he said, would not have patience to see us play the game out with our adversaries: we must produce our hand. It would be expected, that those who for many years had been active in such affairs should shew, that they had formed some clear and decided idea of the principles of colony government; and were capable of drawing out something like a platform of the ground, which might be laid for future and permanent tranquillity.

I felt the truth of what my hon. friend represented; but I felt my situation too. His application might have been made with a far greater propriety to many other gentlemen. No man was indeed ever better disposed, or worse qualified, for such an undertaking than myself. Though I gave so far in to his opinion, that I immediately threw my thoughts into a sort of parliamentary form, I was by no means equally ready to produce them. It generally argues some degree of natural impotence of mind, or some want of knowledge of the world, to hazard plans of government, except from a seat of authority. Propositions are made, not only ineffectually, but somewhat disreputably, when the minds of men are not properly disposed for their reception; and for my part, I am not ambitious of ridicule; not absolutely a candidate for disgrace.

Besides, Sir, to speak the plain truth, I have in general no very exalted opinion of the virtue of paper government; nor of any politics, in which the plan is to be wholly separated from the execution. But when I saw, that anger and violence prevailed every day more and more; and that things were hastening towards an incurable alienation of our colonies; I confess my caution gave way. I felt, this as one of those few moments in which decorum yields to an higher duty. Public calamity is a mighty leveller; and there are occasions when any, even the slightest, chance of doing good, must be laid hold on, even by the most inconsiderable person.

To restore order and repose to an empire so great and so distracted as ours, is, merely in the attempt, an undertaking that would ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. Struggling a good while with these thoughts, by degrees I felt myself more firm. I derived, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually

*Mr Rose Fuller.

produces timidity. I grew less anxious, even from the idea of my own insignificance. For, judging of what you are, by what you ought to be, I persuaded myself, that you would not reject a reasonable proposition, because it had nothing but its reason to recommend it. On the other hand, being totally destitute of all shadow of influence, natural or adventitious, I was very sure, that, if my proposition were futile or dangerous; if it were weakly conceived, or improperly timed, there was nothing exteriour to it, of power to awe, dazzle, or delude you. You will see it just as it is; and you will treat it just as it deserves.

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented from principle, in all parts of the empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions; or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace; sought in its natural course, and in its ordinary haunts.—It is peace sought in the spirit of peace; and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose, by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the *former unsuspecting confidence of the colonies in the mother country*, to give permanent satisfaction to your people; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act, and by the bond of the very same interest, which reconciles them to British government.

My idea is nothing more. Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion; and ever will be so, as long as the world endures. Plain good intention, which is as easily discovered at the first view, as fraud is surely detected at last, is, let me say, of no mean force in the government of mankind. Genuine simplicity of heart is an healing and cementing principle. My plan, therefore, being formed upon the most simple grounds imaginable, may disappoint some people, when they hear it. It has nothing to recommend it to the pruriency of curious ears. There is nothing at all new and captivating in it. It has nothing of the splendour of the project, which has been lately laid upon your table by the noble lord in the blue riband.* It does not propose to fill your lobby with squabbling colony agents, who will require the interposition of your mace, at every instant, to keep the peace among them. It does not institute a magnificent auction of finance, where captivated provinces come to general ransom by bidding against each other, until you knock down the hammer, and determine a proportion of payments, beyond all the powers of algebra to equalise and settle.

The plan, which I shall presume to suggest, derives, however, one great advantage from the proposition and registry of that noble lord's project. The idea of conciliation is admissible. First, the house in accepting the resolution moved by the noble lord, has admitted, notwithstanding the menacing front of our address, notwithstanding our heavy bill of pains and penalties—that we do not think ourselves precluded from all ideas of free grace and bounty.

The house has gone farther; it has declared conciliation admissible, *previous* to any submission on the part of America. It has even shot a good deal beyond that mark, and has admitted, that the complaints of our former mode of exerting the right of taxation were not wholly unfounded. That right thus exerted is allowed to have had something reprehensible in it; something unwise, or something grievous; since, in the midst of our heat and resentment, we, of ourselves, have proposed a capital alteration; and, in order to get rid of what seemed so very exceptionable, have instituted a mode that is altogether new; one that is, indeed, wholly alien from all the ancient methods and forms of parliament.

The *principle* of this proceeding is large enough for my purpose. The means proposed by the noble lord for carrying his ideas into execution, I think indeed, are very indifferently suited to the end; and this I shall endeavour to shew you before I sit down.

* "That when the governour" council, or assembly, or general court, of any of his majesty's provinces or colonies in America, shall *propose* to make provision, *according to the condition, circumstances*, and *situation*, of such province or colony, for contributing their *proportion* to the *common defence*, such *proportion* to be raised under the authority of the general court, or general assembly, of such province or colony, and disposable by parliament) and shall engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government, and the administration of justice, in such province or colony, it will be proper, *if such proposal shall be approved by his majesty, and the two houses of parliament*, and for so long as such provision shall be made accordingly, to forbear, *in respect of such province or colony*, to levy any duty, tax, or assessment, or to impose any farther duty, tax, or assessment, except such duties as it may be expedient to continue to levy or impose, for the regulation of commerce; the nett produce of the duties last mentioned to be carried to the account of such province or colony respectively." Resolution moved by Lord North in the committee; and agreed to by the house, 27th Feb. 1775.

But, for the present, I take my ground on the admitted principle. I mean to give peace. Peace implies reconciliation; and where there has been a material dispute, reconciliation does in a manner always imply concession on the one part or on the other. In this state of things I make no difficulty in affirming, that the proposal ought to originate from us. Great and acknowledged force is not impaired, either in effect or in opinion, by an unwillingness to exert itself. The superior power may offer peace with honour and with safety. Such an offer from such a power will be attributed to magnanimity. But the concessions of the weak are the concessions of fear. When such a one is disarmed, he is wholly at the mercy of his superiour; and he loses for ever that time and those chances, which, as they happen to all men, are the strength and resources of all inferiour power.

The capital leading questions on which you must this day decide, are these two. First, whether you ought to concede; and secondly, what your concession ought to be. On the first of these questions we have gained (as I have just taken the liberty of observing to you) some ground. But I am sensible that a good deal more is still to be done. Indeed, Sir, to enable us to determine both on the one and the other of these great questions with a firm and precise judgment, I think it may be necessary to consider distinctly the true nature and the peculiar circumstances of the object which we have before us. Because after all our struggle, whether we will or not, we must govern America, according to that nature, and to those circumstances; and not according to our own imaginations; not according to abstract ideas of right; by no means according to mere general theories of government, the resort to which appears to me, in our present situation, no better than arrant trifling. I shall therefore endeavour, with your leave, to lay before you some of the most material of these circumstances in as full and as clear a manner as I am able to state them.

The first thing that we have to consider with regard to the nature of the object is—the number of people in the colonies. I have taken for some years a good deal of pains on that point. I can by no calculation justify myself in placing the number below two millions of inhabitants of our own European blood and colour; besides at least 500,000 others, who form no inconsiderable part of the strength and opulence of the whole. This, Sir, is, I believe, about the true number. There is no occasion to exaggerate, where plain truth is of so much weight and importance. But whether I put the present numbers too high or too low, is a matter of little moment. Such is the strength with which population shoots in that part of the world, that state the numbers as high as we will, whilst the dispute continues, the exaggeration ends. Whilst we are discussing any given magnitude, they are grown to it. Whilst we spend our time in deliberating on the mode of governing two millions, we shall find we have millions more to manage. Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood, than they spread from families to communities and from villages to nations.

I put this consideration of the present and the growing numbers in the front of our deliberation; because, Sir, this consideration will make it evident to a blunter discernment than yours, that no partial, narrow, contracted, pinched, occasional system will be at all suitable to such an object. It will shew you, that it is not to be considered as one of those *minima* which are out of the eye and consideration of the law; not a paltry excrescence of the state; not a mean dependent, who may be neglected with little damage, and provoked with little danger. It will prove, that some degree of care and caution is required in the handling such an object; it will shew that you ought not, in reason, to trifle with so large a mass of the interests and feelings of the human race. You could at no time do so without guilt; and be assured you will not be able to do it long with impunity.

But the population of this country, the great and growing population, though a very important consideration, will lose much of its weight, if not combined with other circumstances. The commerce of your colonies is out of all proportion beyond the numbers of the people. This ground of their commerce indeed has been trod some days ago, and with great ability, by a distinguished person,* at your bar. This gentleman, after thirty-five years—it is so long since he first appeared at the same place to plead for the commerce of Great Britain—has come again before you to plead the same cause, without any other effect of time, than, that to the fire of imagination and extent of erudition, which even then marked him as one of the first literary characters of his age, he has added a consummate knowledge in the commercial interest of his country, formed by a long course of enlightened and discriminating experience.

Sir, I should be inexcusable in coming after

* Mr. Glover.

such a person with any detail; if a great part of the members who now fill the house had not the misfortune to be absent when he appeared at your bar. Besides, Sir, I propose to take the matter at periods of time somewhat different from his. There is, if I mistake not, a point of view, from whence if you will look at this subject, it is impossible that it should not make an impression upon you.

I have in my hand two accounts; one a comparative state of the export trade of England to its colonies, as it stood in the year 1704, and as it stood in the year 1772. The other a state of the export trade of this country to its colonies alone, as it stood in 1772, compared with the whole trade of England to all parts of the world (the colonies included) in the year 1704. They are from good vouchers; the latter period from the accounts on your table, the earlier from an original manuscript of Davenant, who first established the inspector general's office, which has been ever since his time so abundant a source of parliamentary information.

The export trade to the colonies consists of three great branches. The African, which, terminating almost wholly in the colonies, must be put to the account of their commerce; the West Indian; and the North American. All these are so interwoven, that the attempt to separate them, would tear to pieces the contexture of the whole; and if not entirely destroy, would very much depreciate the value of all the parts. I therefore consider these three denominations to be, what in effect they are, one trade.

The trade to the colonies, taken on the export side, at the beginning of this century, that is, in the year 1704, stood thus:

Exports to North America, and the West Indies - - - - - - -	£.483,265
To Africa - - - - - - - - - -	86,665
	569,930

In the year 1772, which I take as a middle year between the highest and lowest of those lately laid on your table, the account was as follows:

To North America, and the West Indies - - - - - - - - -	£.4,791,734
To Africa - - - - - - - - - -	866,398
To which if you add the export trade from Scotland, which had in 1704 no existence - - - - - -	364,000
	6,022,132

From five hundred and odd thousand, it has grown to six millions. It has increased no less than twelve-fold. This is the state of the colony trade, as compared with itself at these two periods, within this century;—and this is matter for meditation. But this is not all. Examine my second account. See how the export trade to the colonies alone in 1772 stood in the other point of view, that is, as compared to the whole trade of England in 1704.

The whole export trade of England, including that to the colonies, in 1704 - - - - - - - - - -	£.6,509,000
Export to the colonies alone, in 1772	6,024,000
Difference -	485,000

The trade with America alone is now within less than £.500,000 of being equal to what this great commercial nation, England, carried on at the beginning of this century with the whole world! If I had taken the largest year of those on your table, it would rather have exceeded. But, it will be said, is not this American trade an unnatural protuberance, that has drawn the juices from the rest of the body? The reverse. It is the very food that has nourished every other part into its present magnitude. Our general trade has been greatly augmented; and augmented more or less in almost every part to which it ever extended; but with this material difference; that of the six millions which in the beginning of the century constituted the whole mass of our export commerce, the colony trade was but one twelfth part; it is now (as a part of sixteen millions) considerably more than a third of the whole. This is the relative proportion of the importance of the colonies at these two periods: and all reasoning concerning our mode of treating them must have this proportion as its basis; or it is a reasoning weak, rotten, and sophistical.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot prevail on myself to hurry over this great consideration. It is good for us to be here. We stand where we have an immense view of what is, and what is past. Clouds indeed, and darkness, rest upon the future. Let us, however, before we descend from this noble eminence, reflect that this growth of our national prosperity has happened within the short period of the life of man. It has happened within sixty-eight years. There are those alive whose memory might touch the two extremities. For instance, my Lord Bathurst might remember all the stages of the progress. He was in 1704 of an age at least to be made to comprehend such

things. He was then old enough *acta parentum jam legere, et quæ sit poterit cognoscere virtus.*—Suppose, Sir, that the angel of this auspicious youth, foreseeing the many virtues, which made him one of the most amiable, as he is one of the most fortunate men of his age, had opened to him in vision, that, when, in the fourth generation, the third prince of the house of Brunswick had sat twelve years on the throne of that nation, which (by the happy issue of moderate and healing councils) was to be made Great Britain, he should see his son, Lord Chancellor of England, turn back the current of hereditary dignity to its fountain, and raise him to an higher rank of peerage, whilst he enriched the family with a new one—If amid these bright and happy scenes of domestic honour and prosperity, that angel should have drawn up the curtain, and unfolded the rising glories of his country, and whilst he was gazing with admiration on the then commercial grandeur of England, the genius should point out to him a little speck, scarce visible in the mass of the national interest, a small seminal principle, rather than a formed body, and should tell him —"Young man, there is America—which at this day serves for little more than to amuse you with stories of savage men, and uncouth manners; yet shall, before you taste of death, shew itself equal to the whole of that commerce which now attracts the envy of the world. Whatever England has been growing to by a progressive increase of improvement, brought in by varieties of people, by succession of civilizing conquests and civilizing settlements in a series of seventeen hundred years, you shall see as much added to her by America in the course of a single life!" If this state of his country had been foretold to him, would it not require all the sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of enthusiasm, to make him believe it? Fortunate man, he has lived to see it! Fortunate indeed, if he lives to see nothing that shall vary the prospect, and cloud the setting of his day!

Excuse me, Sir, if turning from such thoughts I resume this comparative view once more. You have seen it on a large scale; look at it on a small one. I will point out to your attention a particular instance of it in the single province of Pennsylvania. In the year 1704 that province called for £.11,459 in value of your commodities, native and foreign. This was the whole. What did it demand in 1772? Why nearly fifty times as much; for in that year the export to Pennsylvania was £.507,909, nearly equal to the export to all the colonies together in the first period.

I choose, Sir, to enter into these minute and particular details; because generalities, which, in all other cases are apt to heighten and raise the subject, have here a tendency to sink it. When we speak of the commerce with our colonies, fiction lags after truth; invention is unfruitful, and imagination cold and barren.

So far, Sir, as to the importance of the object in the view of its commerce, as concerned in the exports from England. If I were to detail the imports, I could shew how many enjoyments they procure, which deceive the burthen of life; how many materials which invigorate the springs of national industry, and extend and animate every part of our foreign and domestic commerce. This would be a curious subject indeed—but I must prescribe bounds to myself in a matter so vast and various.

I pass therefore to the colonies in another point of view, their agriculture. This they have prosecuted with such a spirit, that, besides feeding plentifully their own growing multitude, their annual export of grain, comprehending rice, has some years ago exceeded a million in value. Of their last harvest, I am persuaded, they will export much more. At the beginning of the century, some of these colonies imported corn from the mother country. For some time past, the old world has been fed from the new. The scarcity which you have felt would have been a desolating famine, if this child of your old age, with a true filial piety, with a Roman charity, had not put the full breast of its youthful exuberance to the mouth of its exhausted parent.

As to the wealth which the colonies have drawn from the sea by their fisheries, you had all that matter fully opened at your bar. You surely thought those acquisitions of value, for they seemed even to excite your envy; and yet the spirit, by which that enterprising employment has been exercised, ought rather, in my opinion, to have raised your esteem and admiration. And pray, Sir, what in the world is equal to it? Pass by the other parts, and look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay, and Davis's Streights, whilst we are looking for them beneath the arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold, that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the south. Falkland Island, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the

progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them, than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed by their fisheries. No climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hard industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people; a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood. When I contemplate these things; when I know that the colonies in general owe little or nothing to any care of ours, and that they are not squeezed into this happy form by the constraints of watchful and suspicious government, but that through a wise and salutary neglect, a generous nature has been suffered to take her own way to perfection; when I reflect upon these effects, when I see how profitable they have been to us, I feel all the pride of power sink, and all presumption in the wisdom of human contrivances melt, and die away within me. My rigour relents. I pardon something to the spirit of liberty.

I am sensible, Sir, that all which I have asserted, in my detail, is admitted in the gross; but that quite a different conclusion is drawn from it. America, gentlemen say, is a noble object. It is an object well worth fighting for. Certainly it is, if fighting a people be the best way of gaining them. Gentlemen in this respect will be led to their choice of means by their complexions and their habits. Those who understand the military art, will of course have some predilection for it. Those who wield the thunder of the state, may have more confidence in the efficacy of arms. But I confess, possibly for want of this knowledge, my opinion is much more in favour of prudent management, than of force; considering force not as an odious, but a feeble instrument, for preserving a people so numerous, so active, so growing, so spirited as this, in a profitable and subordinate connection with us.

First, Sir, permit me to observe, that the use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.

My next objection is its *uncertainty*. Terrour is not always the effect of force; and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource; for, conciliation failing, force remains; but, force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness; but they can never be begged as alms, by an impoverished and defeated violence.

A further objection to force is, that you *impair the object* by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the contest. Nothing less will content me, than *whole America*. I do not choose to consume its strength along with our own; because in all parts it is the British strength that I consume. I do not choose to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict; and still less in the midst of it. I may escape; but I can make no insurance against such an event. Let me add, that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit, because it is the spirit that has made the country.

Lastly, we have no sort of *experience* in favour of force as an instrument in the rule of our colonies. Their growth and their utility has been owing to methods altogether different. Our ancient indulgence has been said to be pursued to a fault. It may be so. But we know, if feeling is evidence, that our fault was more tolerable than our attempt to mend it; and our sin far more salutary than our penitence.

These, Sir, are my reasons for not entertaining that high opinion of untried force, by which many gentlemen, for whose sentiments in other particulars I have great respect, seem to be so greatly captivated. But there is still behind a third consideration concerning this object, which serves to determine my opinion on the sort of policy which ought to be pursued in the management of America, even more than its population and its commerce, I mean its *temper and character*.

In this character of the Americans, a love of freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole: and as an ardent is always a jealous affection, your colonies become suspicious, restive, and untractable, whenever they see the least attempt to wrest from them by force, or shuffle from them by chicane, what they think the only advantage worth living for. This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English colonies probably than in any other people of the earth; and this from a great variety of powerful causes: which, to understand the true temper

of their minds, and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely.

First, the people of the colonies are descendents of Englishmen. England, Sir, is a nation, which still I hope respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you, when this part of your character was most predominant; and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas, and on English principles. Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible objects; and every nation has formed to itself some favourite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened, you know, Sir, that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates; or on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens, and most eloquent tongues, have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered. In order to give the fullest satisfaction concerning the importance of this point, it was not only necessary for those who in argument defended the excellence of the English constitution, to insist on this privilege of granting money as a dry point of fact, and to prove, that the right had been acknowledged in ancient parchments, and blind usages, to reside in a certain body called an house of commons. They went much further; they attempted to prove, and they succeeded, that in theory it ought to be so, from the particular nature of a house of commons, as an immediate representative of the people; whether the old records had delivered this oracle or not. They took infinite pains to inculcate, as a fundamental principle, that, in all monarchies, the people must in effect themselves mediately or immediately possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty could subsist. The colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe, or might be endangered in twenty other particulars, without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse; and as they found that beat, they thought themselves sick or sound. I do not say whether they were right or wrong in applying your general arguments to their own case. It is not easy indeed to make a monopoly of theorems and corollaries. The fact is, that they did thus apply those general arguments; and your mode of governing them, whether through lenity or indolence, through wisdom or mistake, confirmed them in the imagination, that they, as well as you, had an interest in these common principles.

They were further confirmed in this pleasing errour, by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies. Their governments are popular in an high degree; some are merely popular; in all, the popular representative is the most weighty; and this share of the people in their ordinary government never fails to inspire them with lofty sentiments, and with a strong aversion from whatever tends to deprive them of their chief importance.

If any thing were wanting to this necessary operation of the form of government, religion would have given it a complete effect. Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people, is no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are protestants; and of that kind, which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favourable to liberty, but built upon it. I do not think, Sir, that the reason of this averseness in the dissenting churches from all that looks like absolute government is so much to be sought in their religious tenets, as in their history. Every one knows that the Roman Catholic religion is at least coeval with most of the governments where it prevails; that it has generally gone hand in hand with them; and received great favour and every kind of support from authority. The church of England too was formed from her cradle under the nursing care of regular government. But the dissenting interests have sprung up in direct opposition to all the ordinary powers of the world; and could justify that opposition only on a strong claim to natural liberty. Their very existence depended on the powerful and unremitted assertion of that claim. All protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent; and the protestantism of the protestant religion. This religion, under a variety of denominations, agreeing in nothing but in the communion of the spirit of liberty,

Pursuing the same plan of punishing by the denial of the exercise of government to still greater lengths, we wholly abrogated the ancient government of Massachusetts. We were confident, that the first feeling, if not the very prospect of anarchy, would instantly enforce a complete submission. The experiment was tried. A new, strange, unexpected face of things appeared. Anarchy is found tolerable. A vast province has now subsisted, and subsisted in a considerable degree of health and vigour, for near a twelvemonth, without governour, without public council, without judges, without executive magistrates. How long it will continue in this state, or what may arise out of this unheard-of situation, how can the wisest of us conjecture? Our late experience has taught us, that many of those fundamental principles, formerly believed infallible, are either not of the importance they were imagined to be; or that we have not at all adverted to some other far more important, and far more powerful principles, which entirely over-rule those we had considered as omnipotent. I am much against any further experiments, which tend to put to the proof any more of these allowed opinions, which contribute so much to the public tranquillity. In effect, we suffer as much at home, by this loosening of all ties, and this concussion of all established opinions, as we do abroad. For, in order to prove that the Americans have no right to their liberties, we are every day endeavouring to subvert the maxims which preserve the whole spirit of our own. To prove that the Americans ought not to be free, we are obliged to depreciate the value of freedom itself; and we never seem to gain a paltry advantage over them in debate, without attacking some of those principles, or deriding some of those feelings, for which our ancestors have shed their blood.

But, Sir, in wishing to put an end to pernicious experiments, I do not mean to preclude the fullest inquiry. Far from it. Far from deciding on a sudden or partial view, I would patiently go round and round the subject, and survey it minutely in every possible aspect. Sir, if I were capable of engaging you to an equal attention, I would state, that, as far as I am capable of discerning, there are but three ways of proceeding relative to this stubborn spirit, which prevails in your colonies, and disturbs your government. These are—To change that spirit, as inconvenient, by removing the causes. To prosecute it as criminal. Or, to comply with it as necessary. I would not be guilty of an imperfect enumeration; I can think *of but these three.* Another has indeed been started, that of giving up the colonies; but it met so slight a reception, that I do not think myself obliged to dwell a great while upon it. It is nothing but a little sally of anger, like the forwardness of peevish children, who, when they cannot get all they would have, are resolved to take nothing.

The first of these plans, to change the spirit as inconvenient, by removing the causes, I think is the most like a systematic proceeding. It is radical in its principle; but it is attended with great difficulties, some of them little short, as I conceive, of impossibilities. This will appear by examining into the plans which have been proposed.

As the growing population of the colonies is evidently one cause of their resistance, it was last session mentioned in both houses, by men of weight, and received not without applause, that, in order to check this evil, it would be proper for the crown to make no further grants of land. But to this scheme there are two objections. The first, that there is already so much unsettled land in private hands, as to afford room for an immense future population, although the crown not only withheld its grants, but annihilated its soil. If this be the case, then the only effect of this avarice of desolation, this hoarding of a royal wilderness, would be to raise the value of the possessions in the hands of the great private monopolists, without any adequate check to the growing and alarming mischief of population.

But if you stopped your grants, what would be the consequence? The people would occupy without grants. They have already so occupied in many places. You cannot station garrisons in every part of these deserts. If you drive the people from one place, they will carry on their annual tillage, and remove with their flocks and herds to another. Many of the people in the back settlements are already little attached to particular situations. Already they have topped the Apalachian mountains. From thence they behold before them an immense plain, one vast, rich, level meadow; a square of five hundred miles. Over this they would wander, without a possibility of restraint; they would change their manners with the habits of their life; would soon forget a government by which they were disowned; would become hordes of English Tartars; and, pouring down upon your unfortified frontiers a fierce and irresistible cavalry, become masters of your governours and your counsellors, your collectors and comptrollers, and of all the slaves that adhered to them. Such would, and, in no long time, must be, the effect of attempting to forbid

as a crime, and to suppress as an evil, the command and blessing of Providence, "Increase and multiply." Such would be the happy result of an endeavour to keep as a lair of wild beasts, that earth, which God, by an express charter, has given to the children of men. Far different, and surely much wiser, has been our policy hitherto. Hitherto we have invited our people by every kind of bounty, to fixed establishments. We have invited the husbandman to look to authority for his title. We have taught him piously to believe in the mysterious virtue of wax and parchment. We have thrown each tract of land, as it was peopled, into districts; that the ruling power should never be wholly out of sight. We have settled all we could; and we have carefully attended every settlement with government.

Adhering, Sir, as I do, to this policy, as well as for the reasons I have just given, I think this new project of hedging-in population to be neither prudent nor practicable.

To impoverish the colonies in general, and in particular to arrest the noble course of their marine enterprises, would be a more easy task. I freely confess it. We have shewn a disposition to a system of this kind; a disposition even to continue the restraint after the offence; looking on ourselves as rivals to our colonies, and persuaded that of course we must gain all that they shall lose. Much mischief we may certainly do. The power inadequate to all other things is often more than sufficient for this. I do not look on the direct and immediate power of the colonies to resist our violence, as very formidable. In this, however, I may be mistaken. But when I consider, that we have colonies for no purpose but to be serviceable to us, it seems to my poor understanding a little preposterous, to make them unserviceable, in order to keep them obedient. It is, in truth, nothing more than the old, and, as I thought, exploded problem of tyranny, which proposes to beggar its subjects into submission. But remember, when you have completed your system of impoverishment, that nature still proceeds in her ordinary course; that discontent will increase with misery; and that there are critical moments in the fortune of all states, when they who are too weak to contribute to your prosperity, may be strong enough to complete your ruin. *Spoliatis arma supersunt.*

The temper and character, which prevail in our colonies, are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people, and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation, in whose veins the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale, would detect the imposition; your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery.

I think it is nearly as little in our power to change their republican religion, as their free descent; or to substitute the Roman Catholic, as a penalty; or the Church of England, as an improvement. The mode of inquisition and dragooning is going out of fashion in the old world; and I should not confide much to their efficacy in the new. The education of the Americans is also on the same unalterable bottom with their religion. You cannot persuade them to burn their books of curious science; to banish their lawyers from the courts of law; or to quench the lights of their assemblies, by refusing to choose those persons who are best read in their privileges. It would be no less impracticable to think of wholly annihilating the popular assemblies, in which these lawyers sit. The army, by which we must govern in their place, would be far more chargeable to us; not quite so effectual; and perhaps, in the end, full as difficult to be kept in obedience.

With regard to the high aristocratic spirit of Virginia and the southern colonies, it has been proposed, I know, to reduce it, by declaring a general enfranchisement of their slaves. This project has had its advocates and panegyrists; yet I never could argue myself into any opinion of it. Slaves are often much attached to their masters. A general wild offer of liberty, would not always be accepted. History furnishes few instances of it. It is sometimes as hard to persuade slaves to be free, as it is to compel freemen to be slaves: and in this auspicious scheme, we should have both these pleasing tasks on our hands at once. But when we talk of enfranchisement, do we not perceive that the American master may enfranchise too; and arm servile hands in defence of freedom? A measure to which other people have had recourse more than once, and not without success, in a desperate situation of their affairs.

Slaves as these unfortunate black people are, and dull as all men are from slavery, must they not a little suspect the offer of freedom from that very nation which has sold them to their present masters? From that nation, one of whose causes of quarrel with those masters, is their refusal to deal any more in that inhuman traffic? An offer of freedom from England, would come rather oddly, shipped to them in an African vessel, which is refused an

entry into the ports of Virginia or Carolina, with a cargo of three hundred Angola negroes. It would be curious to see the Guinea captain attempting at the same instant to publish his proclamation of liberty, and to advertise his sale of slaves.

But let us suppose all these moral difficulties got over. The ocean remains. You cannot pump this dry; and as long as it continues in its present bed, so long all the causes which weaken authority by distance will continue. "Ye gods, annihilate but space and time, and make two lovers happy!"—was a pious and passionate prayer;—but just as reasonable, as many of the serious wishes of very grave and solemn politicians.

If then, Sir, it seems almost desperate to think of any alterative course, for changing the moral causes (and not quite easy to remove the natural) which produce prejudices irreconcileable to the late exercise of our authority; but that the spirit infallibly will continue; and, continuing, will produce such effects, as now embarrass us; the second mode under consideration is, to prosecute that spirit in its overt acts, as *criminal*.

At this proposition, I must pause a moment. The thing seems a great deal too big for my ideas of jurisprudence. It should seem, to my way of conceiving such matters, that there is a very wide difference in reason and policy, between the mode of proceeding on the irregular conduct of scattered individuals, or even of bands of men, who disturb order within the state, and the civil dissensions which may, from time to time, on great questions, agitate the several communities which compose a great empire. It looks to me to be narrow and pedantic, to apply the ordinary ideas of criminal justice to this great public contest. I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against an whole people. I cannot insult and ridicule the feelings of millions of my fellow-creatures, as Sir Edward Coke insulted one excellent individual (Sir Walter Raleigh) at the bar. I am not ripe to pass sentence on the gravest public bodies, entrusted with magistracies of great authority and dignity, and charged with the safety of their fellow-citizens, upon the very same title that I am. I really think, that for wise men this is not judicious; for sober men, not decent; for minds tinctured with humanity, not mild and merciful.

Perhaps, Sir, I am mistaken in my idea of an empire, as distinguished from a single state or kingdom. But my idea of it is this; that an empire is the aggregate of many states under one common head; whether this head be a monarch, or a presiding republic. It does, in such constitutions, frequently happen (and nothing but the dismal, cold, dead uniformity of servitude can prevent its happening) that the subordinate parts have many local privileges and immunities. Between these privileges, and the supreme common authority, the line may be extremely nice. Of course disputes, often too, very bitter disputes, and much ill blood, will arise. But though every privilege is an exemption (in the case) from the ordinary exercise of the supreme authority, it is no denial of it. The claim of a privilege seems rather *ex vi termini*, to imply a superiour power. For to talk of the privileges of a state or of a person, who has no superiour, is hardly any better than speaking nonsense. Now, in such unfortunate quarrels, among the component parts of a great political union of communities, I can scarcely conceive any thing more completely imprudent, than for the head of the empire to insist, that, if any privilege is pleaded against his will, or his acts, that his whole authority is denied; instantly to proclaim rebellion, to beat to arms, and to put the offending provinces under the ban. Will not this, Sir, very soon teach the provinces to make no distinctions on their part? Will it not teach them that the government, against which a claim of liberty is tantamount to high treason, is a government to which submission is equivalent to slavery? It may not always be quite convenient to impress dependent communities with such an idea.

We are indeed, in all disputes with the colonies, by the necessity of things, the judge. It is true, Sir. But I confess, that the character of judge in my own cause, is a thing that frightens me. Instead of filling me with pride, I am exceedingly humbled by it. I cannot proceed with a stern, assured, judicial confidence, until I find myself in something more like a judicial character. I must have these hesitations as long as I am compelled to recollect, that, in my little reading upon such contests as these, the sense of mankind has, at least, as often decided against the superiour as the subordinate power. Sir, let me add too, that the opinion of my having some abstract right in my favour would not put me much at my ease in passing sentence; unless I could be sure, that there were no rights which, in their exercise under certain circumstances, were not the most odious of all wrongs, and the most vexatious of all injustice. Sir, these considerations have great weight with me, when I find things so circumstanced, that I

see the same party, at once a civil litigant against me in point of right, and a culprit before me; while I sit as criminal judge, on acts of his, whose moral quality is to be decided upon the merits of that very litigation. Men are every now and then put, by the complexity of human affairs, into strange situations; but justice is the same, let the judge be in what situation he will.

There is, Sir, also a circumstance which convinces me, that this mode of criminal proceeding is not (at least in the present stage of our contest) altogether expedient; which is nothing less than the conduct of those very persons who have seemed to adopt that mode, by lately declaring a rebellion in Massachusetts' Bay, as they had formerly addressed to have traitors brought hither under an act of Henry the Eighth, for trial. For though rebellion is declared, it is not proceeded against as such; nor have any steps been taken towards the apprehension or conviction of any individual offender, either on our late or our former address; but modes of public coercion have been adopted, and such as have much more resemblance to a sort of qualified hostility towards an independent power than the punishment of rebellious subjects. All this seems rather inconsistent; but it shews how difficult it is to apply these juridical ideas to our present case.

In this situation, let us seriously and coolly ponder. What is it we have got by all our menaces, which have been many and ferocious? What advantage have we derived from the penal laws we have passed, and which, for the time, have been severe and numerous? What advances have we made towards our object, by the sending of a force, which, by land and sea, is no contemptible strength? Has the disorder abated? Nothing less.—When I see things in this situation, after such confident hopes, bold promises, and active exertions, I cannot, for my life, avoid a suspicion, that the plan itself is not correctly right.

If then the removal of the causes of this spirit of American liberty be, for the greater part, or rather entirely, impracticable; if the ideas of criminal process be inapplicable, or, if applicable, are in the highest degree inexpedient, what way yet remains? No way is open, but the third and last—to comply with the American spirit as necessary; or, if you please to submit to it, as a necessary evil.

If we adopt this mode; if we mean to conciliate and concede; let us see of what nature the concession ought to be: to ascertain the nature of our concession, we must look at their complaint. The colonies complain, that they have not the characteristic mark and seal of British freedom. They complain, that they are taxed in a parliament, in which they are not represented. If you mean to satisfy them at all, you must satisfy them with regard to this complaint. If you mean to please any people, you must give them the boon which they ask; not what you may think better for them, but of a kind totally different. Such an act may be a wise regulation, but it is no concession; whereas our present theme is the mode of giving satisfaction.

Sir, I think you must perceive, that I am resolved this day to have nothing at all to do with the question of the right of taxation. Some gentlemen startle—but it is true; I put it totally out of the question. It is less than nothing in my consideration. I do not indeed wonder, nor will you, Sir, that gentlemen of profound learning are fond of displaying it on this profound subject. But my consideration is narrow, confined, and wholly limited to the policy of the question. I do not examine, whether the giving away a man's money be a power excepted and reserved out of the general trust of government; and how far all mankind, in all forms of polity, are entitled to an exercise of that right by the charter of nature. Or whether, on the contrary, a right of taxation is necessarily involved in the general principle of legislation, and inseparable from the ordinary supreme power. These are deep questions, where great names militate against each other; where reason is perplexed; and an appeal to authorities only thickens the confusion. For high and reverend authorities lift up their heads on both sides; and there is no sure footing in the middle. This point is the *great Serbonian bog, betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old, where armies whole have sunk.* I do not intend to be overwhelmed in that bog, though in such respectable company. The question with me is, not whether you have a right to render your people miserable; but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not, what a lawyer tells me, I *may* do; but what humanity, reason, and justice, tell me, I ought to do. Is a politic act the worse for being a generous one? Is no concession proper, but that which is made from your want of right to keep what you grant? Or does it lessen the grace or dignity of relaxing in the exercise of an odious claim, because you have your evidence-room full of titles, and your magazines stuffed with arms to enforce them? What signify all those titles, and all those arms? Of what avail are

they, when the reason of the thing tells me, that the assertion of my title is the loss of my suit; and that I could do nothing but wound myself by the use of my own weapons?

Such is steadfastly my opinion of the absolute necessity of keeping up the concord of this empire by a unity of spirit, though in a diversity of operations, that, if I were sure the colonists had, at their leaving this country, sealed a regular compact of servitude; that they had solemnly abjured all the rights of citizens; that they had made a vow to renounce all ideas of liberty for them and their posterity, to all generations, yet I should hold myself obliged to conform to the temper I found universally prevalent in my own day, and to govern two million of men, impatient of servitude, on the principles of freedom. I am not determining a point of law; I am restoring tranquillity; and the general character and situation of a people must determine what sort of government is fitted for them. That point nothing else can or ought to determine.

My idea, therefore, without considering whether we yield as matter of right, or grant as matter of favour, is, *to admit the people of our colonies into an interest in the constitution*; and, by recording that admission in the journals of parliament, to give them as strong an assurance as the nature of the thing will admit, that we mean for ever to adhere to that solemn declaration of systematic indulgence.

Some years ago, the repeal of a revenue act, upon its understood principle, might have served to shew, that we intended an unconditional abatement of the exercise of a taxing power. Such a measure was then sufficient to remove all suspicion, and to give perfect content. But unfortunate events, since that time, may make something further necessary; and not more necessary for the satisfaction of the colonies, than for the dignity and consistency of our own future proceedings.

I have taken a very incorrect measure of the disposition of the house, if this proposal in itself would be received with dislike. I think, Sir, we have few American financiers. But our misfortune is, we are too acute; we are too exquisite in our conjectures of the future, for men oppressed with such great and present evils. The more moderate among the opposers of parliamentary concession freely confess, that they hope no good from taxation; but they apprehend the colonists have further views; and if this point were conceded, they would instantly attack the trade laws. These gentlemen are convinced, that this was the intention from the beginning; and the quarrel of the Americans with taxation was no more than a cloak and cover to this design. Such has been the language even of a gentleman* of real moderation, and of a natural temper so well adjusted to fair and equal government. I am, however, Sir, not a little surprised at this kind of discourse, whenever I hear it; and I am the more surprised, on account of the arguments which I constantly find in company with it, and which are often urged from the same mouths, and on the same day.

For instance, when we allege, that it is against reason to tax a people under so many restraints in trade as the Americans, the noble lord† in the blue riband shall tell you, that the restraints on trade are futile and useless; of no advantage to us, and of no burthen to those on whom they are imposed; that the trade to America is not secured by the acts of navigation, but by the natural and irresistible advantage of a commercial preference.

Such is the merit of the trade laws in this posture of the debate. But when strong internal circumstances are urged against the taxes; when the scheme is dissected; when experience and the nature of things are brought to prove, and do prove, the utter impossibility of obtaining an effective revenue from the colonies; when these things are pressed, or rather press themselves, so as to drive the advocates of colony taxes to a clear admission of the futility of the scheme; then, Sir, the sleeping trade laws revive from their trance; and this useless taxation is to be kept sacred, not for its own sake, but as a counter-guard and security of the laws of trade.

Then, Sir, you keep up revenue laws which are mischievous, in order to preserve trade laws that are useless. Such is the wisdom of our plan in both its members. They are separately given up as of no value, and yet one is always to be defended for the sake of the other. But I cannot agree with the noble lord, nor with the pamphlet from whence he seems to have borrowed these ideas, concerning the inutility of the trade laws. For without idolizing them, I am sure they are still, in many ways, of great use to us; and in former times, they have been of the greatest. They do confine, and they do greatly narrow, the market for the Americans. But my perfect conviction of this, does not help me in the least to discern how the revenue laws form any security whatsoever to the commercial regulations; or that these commercial regulations are the

* Mr. Rice. † Lord North.

true ground of the quarrel; or, that the giving way in any one instance of authority, is to lose all that may remain unconceded.

One fact is clear and indisputable. The public and avowed origin of this quarrel, was on taxation. This quarrel has indeed brought on new disputes on new questions; but certainly the least bitter, and the fewest of all, on the trade laws. To judge which of the two be the real radical cause of quarrel, we have to see whether the commercial dispute did, in order of time, precede the dispute on taxation? There is not a shadow of evidence for it. Next, to enable us to judge whether at this moment a dislike to the trade laws be the real cause of quarrel, it is absolutely necessary to put the taxes out of the question by a repeal. See how the Americans act in this position, and then you will be able to discern correctly what is the true object of the controversy, or whether any controversy at all will remain? Unless you consent to remove this cause of difference, it is impossible, with decency, to assert that the dispute is not upon what it is avowed to be. And I would, Sir, recommend to your serious consideration, whether it be prudent to form a rule for punishing people, not on their own acts, but on your conjectures? Surely it is preposterous at the very best. It is not justifying your anger, by their misconduct; but it is converting your ill-will into their delinquency.

But the colonies will go further.—Alas! alas! when will this speculating against fact and reason end?—What will quiet these panic fears which we entertain of the hostile effect of a conciliatory conduct? Is it true, that no case can exist, in which it is proper for the sovereign to accede to the desires of his discontented subjects? Is there any thing peculiar in this case, to make a rule for itself? Is all authority of course lost, when it is not pushed to the extreme? Is it a certain maxim, that, the fewer causes of dissatisfaction are left by government, the more the subject will be inclined to resist and rebel?

All these objections being in fact no more than suspicions, conjectures, divinations, formed in defiance of fact and experience; they did not, Sir, discourage me from entertaining the idea of a conciliatory concession, founded on the principles which I have just stated.

In forming a plan for this purpose, I endeavoured to put myself in that frame of mind, which was the most natural, and the most reasonable; and which was certainly the most probable means of securing me from all errour. I set out with a perfect distrust of my own abilities; a total renunciation of every speculation of my own; and with a profound reverence for the wisdom of our ancestors, who have left us the inheritance of so happy a constitution, and so flourishing an empire, and what is a thousand times more valuable, the treasury of the maxims and principles which formed the one, and obtained the other.

During the reigns of the kings of Spain of the Austrian family, whenever they were at a loss in the Spanish councils, it was common for their statesmen to say, that they ought to consult the genius of Philip the Second. The genius of Philip the Second might mislead them; and the issue of their affairs shewed, that they had not chosen the most perfect standard. But, Sir, I am sure that I shall not be misled, when, in a case of constitutional difficulty, I consult the genius of the English constitution. Consulting at that oracle (it was with all due humility and piety) I found four capital examples in a similar case before me: those of Ireland, Wales, Chester, and Durham.

Ireland, before the English conquest, though never governed by a despotic power, had no parliament. How far the English parliament itself was at that time modelled according to the present form, is disputed among antiquaries. But we have all the reason in the world to be assured, that a form of parliament, such as England then enjoyed, she instantly communicated to Ireland; and we are equally sure that almost every successive improvement in constitutional liberty, as fast as it was made here, was transmitted thither. The feudal baronage, and the feudal knighthood, the roots of our primitive constitution, were early transplanted into that soil; and grew and flourished there. Magna Charta, if it did not give us originally the house of commons, gave us at least a house of commons of weight and consequence. But your ancestors did not churlishly sit down alone to the feast of Magna Charta. Ireland was made immediately a partaker. This benefit of English laws and liberties, I confess, was not at first extended to *all* Ireland. Mark the consequence. English authority and English liberty had exactly the same boundaries. Your standard could never be advanced an inch before your privileges. Sir John Davis shews beyond a doubt, that the refusal of a general communication of these rights, was the true cause why Ireland was five hundred years in subduing; and after the vain projects of a military government, attempted in the reign of queen Elizabeth, it was soon discovered, that nothing could make that country English, in civility and allegiance, but your

laws and your forms of legislature. It was not English arms, but the English constitution, that conquered Ireland. From that time, Ireland has ever had a general parliament, as she had before a partial parliament. You changed the people; you altered the religion; but you never touched the form or the vital substance of free government in that kingdom. You deposed kings; you restored them; you altered the succession to theirs, as well as to your own crown; but you never altered their constitution; the principle of which was respected by usurpation; restored with the restoration of monarchy, and established, I trust, for ever, by the glorious Revolution. This has made Ireland the great and flourishing kingdom that it is; and from a disgrace and a burthen intolerable to this nation, has rendered her a principal part of our strength and ornament. This country cannot be said to have ever formally taxed her. The irregular things done in the confusion of mighty troubles, and on the hinge of great revolutions, even if all were done that is said to have been done, form no example. If they have any effect in argument, they make an exception to prove the rule. None of your own liberties could stand a moment if the casual deviations from them at such times, were suffered to be used as proofs of their nullity. By the lucrative amount of such casual breaches in the constitution, judge what the stated and fixed rule of supply has been in that kingdom. Your Irish pensioners would starve, if they had no other fund to live on than taxes granted by English authority. Turn your eyes to those popular grants from whence all your great supplies are come; and learn to respect that only source of public wealth in the British empire.

My next example is Wales. This country was said to be reduced by Henry the Third. It was said more truly to be so by Edward the First. But though then conquered, it was not looked upon as any part of the realm of England. Its old constitution, whatever that might have been, was destroyed, and no good one was substituted in its place. The care of that tract was put into the hands of lords marchers—a form of government of a very singular kind; a strange heterogeneous monster, something between hostility and government; perhaps it has a sort of resemblance, according to the modes of those times, to that of commander in chief at present, to whom all civil power is granted as secondary. The manners of the Welsh nation followed the genius of the government; the people were ferocious, restive, savage, and uncultivated; sometimes composed, never pacified. Wales within itself, was in perpetual disorder; and it kept the frontier of England in perpetual alarm. Benefits from it to the state, there were none. Wales was only known to England by incursion and invasion.

Sir, during that state of things, parliament was not idle. They attempted to subdue the fierce spirit of the Welsh by all sorts of rigorous laws. They prohibited by statute the sending all sorts of arms into Wales, as you prohibit by proclamation (with something more of doubt on the legality) the sending arms to America. They disarmed the Welsh by statute, as you attempted, (but still with more question on the legality) to disarm New England by an instruction. They made an act to drag offenders from Wales into England for trial, as you have done (but with more hardship) with regard to America. By another act, where one of the parties was an Englishman, they ordained, that his trial should be always by English. They made acts to restrain trade, as you do; and they prevented the Welsh from the use of fairs and markets, as you do the Americans from fisheries and foreign ports. In short, when the statute-book was not quite so much swelled as it is now, you find no less than fifteen acts of penal regulation on the subject of Wales.

Here we rub our hands—A fine body of precedents for the authority of parliament and the use of it!—I admit it fully; and pray add likewise to these precedents, that all the while, Wales rid this kingdom like an *incubus*; that it was an unprofitable and oppressive burthen; and that an Englishman travelling in that country could not go six yards from the high road without being murdered.

The march of the human mind is slow. Sir, it was not, until after two hundred years, discovered, that by an eternal law, Providence had decreed vexation to violence; and poverty to rapine. Your ancestors did however at length open their eyes to the ill husbandry of injustice. They found that the tyranny of a free people could of all tyrannies the least be endured; and that laws made against a whole nation were not the most effectual methods for securing its obedience. Accordingly, in the twenty-seventh year of Henry VIII. the course was entirely altered. With a preamble stating the entire and perfect rights of the crown of England, it gave to the Welsh all the rights and privileges of English subjects. A political order was established; the military power gave way to the civil; the marches were turned into counties. But that a nation should have a right to English liberties, and yet no share at all in the fundamental security of these

liberties, the grant of their own property, seemed a thing so incongruous; that eight years after, that is, in the thirty-fifth of that reign, a complete and not ill-proportioned representation by counties and boroughs was bestowed upon Wales, by act of parliament. From that moment, as by a charm, the tumults subsided; obedience was restored; peace, order, and civilization, followed in the train of liberty—When the day-star of the English constitution had arisen in their hearts, all was harmony within and without—

———Simul alba nautis,
Stella refulsit,
Defluit saxis agitatus humor;
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes,
Et minax (quod sic voluere) ponto
Unda recumbit.

The very same year the county palatine of Chester received the same relief from its oppressions, and the same remedy to its disorders. Before this time Chester was little less distempered than Wales. The inhabitants, without rights themselves, were the fittest to destroy the rights of others; and from thence Richard II. drew the standing army of archers, with which for a time he oppressed England. The people of Chester applied to parliament in a petition penned as I shall read to you.

"To the King our sovereign lord, in most humble wise shewn unto your excellent majesty, the inhabitants of your grace's county palatine of Chester; That where the said county palatine of Chester is and hath been always hitherto exempt, excluded and separated out and from your high court of parliament, to have any knights and burgesses within the said court; by reason whereof the said inhabitants have hitherto sustained manifold disherisons, losses, and damages, as well in their lands, goods, and bodies, as in the good, civil, and politic governance and maintenance of the commonwealth of their said country: (2.) And for as much as the said inhabitants have always hitherto been bound by the acts and statutes made and ordained by your said highness, and your most noble progenitors, by authority of the said court, as far forth as other counties, cities, and boroughs have been, that have had their knights and burgesses within your said court of parliament, and yet have had neither knight ne burgess there for the said county palatine; the said inhabitants, for lack thereof, have been oftentimes touched and grieved with acts and statutes made within the said court, as well derogatory unto the most ancient jurisdictions, liberties and privileges of your said county palatine, as prejudicial unto the commonwealth, quietness, rest, and peace of your grace's most bounded subjects inhabiting within the same."

What did parliament with this audacious address?—Reject it as a libel? Treat it as an affront to government? Spurn it as a derogation from the rights of legislature? Did they toss it over the table? Did they burn it by the hands of the common hangman?—They took the petition of grievance, all rugged as it was, without softening or temperament, unpurged of the original bitterness and indignation of complaint; they made it the very preamble to their act of redress; and consecrated its principle to all ages in the sanctuary of legislation.

Here is my third example. It was attended with the success of the two former. Chester, civilized as well as Wales, has demonstrated that freedom and not servitude is the cure of anarchy; as religion, and not atheism, is the true remedy for superstition. Sir, this pattern of Chester was followed in the reign of Charles II. with regard to the county palatine of Durham, which is my fourth example. This county had long lain out of the pale of free legislation. So scrupulously was the example of Chester followed, that the style of the preamble is nearly the same with that of the Chester act; and without affecting the abstract extent of the authority of parliament, it recognises the equity of not suffering any considerable district in which the British subjects may act as a body, to be taxed without their own voice in the grant.

Now if the doctrines of policy contained in these preambles, and the force of these examples in the acts of parliaments, avail any thing, what can be said against applying them with regard to America? Are not the people of America as much Englishmen as the Welsh? The preamble of the act of Henry VIII. says, the Welsh speak a language no way resembling that of his majesty's English subjects. Are the Americans not as numerous? If we may trust the learned and accurate Judge Barrington's account of North Wales, and take that as a standard to measure the rest, there is no comparison. The people cannot amount to above 200,000; not a tenth part of the number in the colonies. Is America in rebellion? Wales was hardly ever free from it. Have you attempted to govern America by penal statutes? You made fifteen for Wales. But your legislative authority is perfect with regard to America; was it less perfect in Wales, Chester, and Durham? But America is vir-

tually represented. What! does the electric force of virtual representation more easily pass over the Atlantic, than pervade Wales, which lies in your neighbourhood; or than Chester and Durham, surrounded by abundance of representation that is actual and palpable? But, Sir, your ancestors thought this sort of virtual representation, however ample, to be totally insufficient for the freedom of the inhabitants of territories that are so near, and comparatively so inconsiderable. How then can I think it sufficient for those which are infinitely greater, and infinitely more remote?

You will now, Sir, perhaps imagine, that I am on a point of proposing to you a scheme for the representation of the colonies in parliament. Perhaps I might be inclined to entertain some such thought; but a great flood stops me in my course. *Opposuit natura*—I cannot remove the eternal barriers of the creation. The thing in that mode, I do not know to be possible. As I meddle with no theory, I do not absolutely assert the impracticability of such a representation. But I do not see my way to it; and those who have been more confident, have not been more successful. However, the arm of public benevolence is not shortened; and there are often several means to the same end. What nature has disjoined in one way, wisdom may unite in another. When we cannot give the benefit as we would wish, let us not refuse it altogether. If we cannot give the principal, let us find a substitute. But how? Where? What substitute?

Fortunately I am not obliged for the ways and means of this substitute to tax my own unproductive invention. I am not even obliged to go to the rich treasury of the fertile framers of imaginary commonwealths; not to the Republic of Plato, not to the Utopia of More; not to the Oceana of Harrington. It is before me—It is at my feet, *and the rude swain treads daily on it with his clouted shoon.* I only wish you to recognise, for the theory, the ancient constitutional policy of this kingdom with regard to representation, as that policy has been declared in acts of parliament; and, as to the practice, to return to that mode which an uniform experience has marked out to you, as best; and in which you walked with security, advantage, and honour, until the year 1763.

My resolutions therefore mean to establish the equity, and justice of a taxation of America, by *grant*, and not by *imposition*. To mark the *legal competency* of the colony assemblies for the support of their government in peace, and for public aids in time of war. To acknowledge that this legal competency has had *a dutiful and beneficial exercise*; and that experience has shewn the *benefit of their grants*, and the *futility of parliamentary taxation as a method of supply*.

These solid truths compose six fundamental propositions. There are three more resolutions corollary to these. If you admit the first set, you can hardly reject the others. But if you admit the first, I shall be far from solicitous whether you accept or refuse the last. I think these six massive pillars will be of strength sufficient to support the temple of British concord. I have no more doubt than I entertain of my existence, that, if you admitted these, you would command an immediate peace; and with but tolerable future management, a lasting obedience in America. I am not arrogant in this confident assurance. The propositions are all mere matters of fact; and if they are such facts as draw irresistible conclusions even in the stating, this is the power of truth, and not any management of mine.

Sir, I shall open the whole plan to you, together with such observations on the motions as may tend to illustrate them where they may want explanation. The first is a resolution—"That the colonies and plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any knights and burgesses, or others, to represent them in the high court of parliament."—This is a plain matter of fact, necessary to be laid down, and (excepting the description) it is laid down in the language of the constitution; it is taken nearly *verbatim* from acts of parliament.

The second is like unto the first—"That the said colonies and plantations have been liable to, and bounden by, several subsidies, payments, rates, and taxes, given and granted by parliament, though the said colonies and plantations have not their knights and burgesses, in the said high court of parliament, of their own election, to represent the condition of their country; by lack whereof they have been oftentimes touched and grieved by subsidies given, granted, and assented to, in the said court, in a manner prejudicial to the commonwealth, quietness, rest, and peace of the subjects inhabiting within the same."

Is this description too hot, or too cold, too strong, or too weak? Does it arrogate too much to the supreme legislature? Does it lean too much to the claims of the people? If it runs into any of these errours, the fault is not mine. It is the language of your own

ancient acts of parliament. *Non meus hic sermo, sed quæ præcepit Ofellus, rusticus, abnormis sapiens.* It is the genuine produce of the ancient, rustic, manly, home-bred sense of this country.—I did not dare to rub off a particle of the venerable rust that rather adorns and preserves, than destroys the metal. It would be a profanation to touch with a tool the stones which construct the sacred altar of peace. I would not violate with modern polish the ingenuous and noble roughness of these truly constitutional materials. Above all things, I was resolved not to be guilty of tampering, the odious vice of restless and unstable minds. I put my foot in the tracts of our forefathers; where I can neither wander nor stumble. Determining to fix articles of peace, I was resolved not to be wise beyond what was written; I was resolved to use nothing else than the form of sound words; to let others abound in their own sense; and carefully to abstain from all expressions of my own. What the law has said, I say. In all things else I am silent. I have no organ but for her words. This, if it be not ingenious, I am sure is safe.

There are indeed words expressive of grievance in this second resolution, which those who are resolved always to be in the right, will deny to contain matter of fact, as applied to the present case; although parliament thought them true, with regard to the counties of Chester and Durham. They will deny that the Americans were ever "touched and grieved" with the taxes. If they consider nothing in taxes but their weight as pecuniary impositions, there might be some pretence for this denial. But men may be sorely touched and deeply grieved in their privileges, as well as in their purses. Men may lose little in property by the act which takes away all their freedom. When a man is robbed of a trifle on the highway, it is not the two-pence lost that constitutes the capital outrage. This is not confined to privileges. Even ancient indulgences withdrawn, without offence on the part of those who enjoyed such favours, operate as grievances. But were the Americans then not touched and grieved by the taxes, in some measure, merely as taxes? If so, why were they almost all, either wholly repealed or exceedingly reduced? Were they not touched and grieved, even by the regulating duties of the sixth of George II.? Else why were the duties first reduced to one third in 1764, and afterwards to a third of that third in the year 1766? Were they not touched and grieved by the stamp act? I shall say they were, until that tax is revived. Were they not touched and grieved by the duties of 1767, which were likewise repealed, and which, Lord Hillsborough tells you (for the ministry) were laid contrary to the true principle of commerce? Is not the assurance given by that noble person to the colonies of a resolution to lay no more taxes on them, an admission that taxes would touch and grieve them? Is not the resolution of the noble lord in the blue riband, now standing on your journals, the strongest of all proofs that parliamentary subsidies really touched and grieved them? Else why all these changes, modifications, repeals, assurances, and resolutions?

The next proposition is—"That, from the distance of the said colonies, and from other circumstances, no method hath hitherto been devised for procuring a representation in parliament for the said colonies." This is an assertion of a fact. I go no further on the paper; though in my private judgment, an useful representation is impossible; I am sure it is not desired by them; nor ought it perhaps by us; but I abstain from opinions.

The fourth resolution is—"That each of the said colonies hath within itself a body, chosen in part, or in the whole, by the freemen, freeholders, or other free inhabitants thereof, commonly called the General Assembly, or General Court, with powers legally to raise, levy, and assess, according to the several usages of such colonies, duties and taxes towards defraying all sorts of public services."

This competence in the colony assemblies is certain. It is proved by the whole tenour of their acts of supply in all the assemblies, in which the constant style of granting is, "an aid to his majesty;" and acts granting to the crown have regularly for near a century passed the public offices without dispute. Those who have been pleased paradoxically to deny this right, holding that none but the British parliament can grant to the crown, are wished to look to what is done, not only in the colonies, but in Ireland, in one uniform unbroken tenour every session. Sir, I am surprised, that this doctrine should come from some of the law servants of the crown. I say, that if the crown could be responsible, his majesty—but certainly the ministers, and even those law officers themselves, through whose hands the acts pass biennially in Ireland, or annually in the colonies, are in an habitual course of committing impeachable offences. What habitual offenders have been all presidents of the council, all secretaries of state, all first lords of trade, all attornies and all solicitors general! However they are safe;

the two former provinces than it enjoyed in the latter; and though the abuses have been full as great, and as flagrant, in the exempted as in the punished. The same reasons of prudence and accommodation have weight with me in restoring the charter of Massachusetts' Bay. Besides, Sir, the act which changes the charter of Massachusetts is in many particulars so exceptionable, that if I did not wish absolutely to repeal, I would by all means desire to alter it; as several of its provisions tend to the subversion of all public and private justice. Such, among others, is the power in the governour to change the sheriff at his pleasure; and to make a new returning officer for every special cause. It is shameful to behold such a regulation standing among English laws.

The act for bringing persons accused of committing murder under the orders of government to England for trial, is but temporary. That act has calculated the probable duration of our quarrel with the colonies; and is accommodated to that supposed duration. I would hasten the happy moment of reconciliation; and therefore must, on my principle, get rid of that most justly obnoxious act.

The act of Henry the Eighth, for the trial of treasons, I do not mean to take away, but to confine it to its proper bounds and original intention; to make it expressly for trial of treasons (and the greatest treasons may be committed) in places where the jurisdiction of the crown does not extend.

Having guarded the privileges of local legislature, I would next secure to the colonies a fair and unbiassed judicature; for which purpose, Sir, I propose the following resolution: "That, from the time when the general assembly or general court of any colony or plantation in North America, shall have appointed by act of assembly, duly confirmed, a settled salary to the offices of the chief justice and other judges of the superiour court, it may be proper, that the said chief justice and other judges of the superiour courts of such colony, shall hold his and their office and offices during their good behaviour; and shall not be removed therefrom, but when the said removal shall be adjudged by his majesty in council, upon a hearing on complaint from the general assembly, or on a complaint from the governour, or counsel, or the house of representatives severally, of the colony in which the said chief justice and other judges have exercised the said offices."

The next resolution relates to the courts of admiralty.

It is this:—"That it may be proper to regulate the courts of admiralty, or vice admiralty, authorized by the 15th chap. of the 4th of George the Third, in such a manner as to make the same more commodious to those who sue, or are sued, in the said courts, and to provide for the more decent maintenance of the judges in the same."

These courts I do not wish to take away; they are in themselves proper establishments. This court is one of the capital securities of the act of navigation. The extent of its jurisdiction, indeed, has been increased; but this is altogether as proper, and is, indeed, on many accounts, more eligible, where new powers were wanted, than a court absolutely new. But courts incommodiously situated, in effect, deny justice; and a court, partaking in the fruits of its own condemnation, is a robber. The congress complain, and complain justly of this grievance.*

These are the three consequential propositions. I have thought of two or three more; but they came rather too near detail, and to the province of executive government, which I wish parliament always to superintend, never to assume. If the first six are granted, congruity will carry the latter three. If not, the things that remain unrepealed, will be, I hope, rather unseemly incumbrances on the building, than very materially detrimental to its strength and stability.

Here, Sir, I should close; but that I plainly perceive some objections remain, which I ought, if possible, to remove. The first will be, that, in resorting to the doctrine of our ancestors, as contained in the preamble to the Chester act, I prove too much; that the grievance from a want of representation stated in that preamble, goes to the whole of legislation as well as to taxation. And that the colonies grounding themselves upon that doctrine, will apply it to all parts of legislative authority.

To this objection, with all possible deference and humility, and wishing as little as any man living to impair the smallest particle of our supreme authority, I answer, that *the words are the words of parliament, and not mine*; and, that all false and inconclusive inferences, drawn from them, are not mine; for I heartily disclaim any such inference. I have chosen the words of an act of parliament, which Mr. Grenville, surely a tolerably zealous and very judicious advocate for the sovereignty of parliament, formerly moved to have read at your table, in

* The Solicitor-General informed Mr. B. when the resolutions were separately moved, that the grievance of the judges partaking of the profits of the seizure had been redressed by office; accordingly the resolution was amended.

confirmation of his tenets. It is true, that Lord Chatham considered these preambles as declaring strongly in favour of his opinions. He was a no less powerful advocate for the privileges of the Americans. Ought I not from hence to presume, that these preambles are as favourable as possible to both, when properly understood; favourable both to the rights of parliament, and to the privilege of the dependencies of this crown? But, Sir, the object of grievance in my resolution, I have not taken from the Chester, but from the Durham act, which confines the hardship of want of representation to the case of subsidies; and which therefore falls in exactly with the case of the colonies. But whether the unrepresented counties were *de jure*, or *de facto*, bound, the preambles do not accurately distinguish; nor indeed was it necessary; for whether *de jure*, or *de facto*, the legislature thought the exercise of the power of taxing, as of right, or as of fact without right, equally a grievance, and equally oppressive.

I do not know, that the colonies have, in any general way, or in any cool hour, gone much beyond the demand of immunity in relation to taxes. It is not fair to judge of the temper or dispositions of any man, or any set of men, when they are composed and at rest, from their conduct, or their expressions, in a state of disturbance and irritation. It is besides a very great mistake to imagine, that mankind follow up practically any speculative principle, either of government or of freedom, as far as it will go in argument and logical illation. We Englishmen stop very short of the principles upon which we support any given part of our constitution; or even the whole of it together. I could easily, if I had not already tired you, give you very striking and convincing instances of it. This is nothing but what is natural and proper. All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences; we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and, we choose rather to be happy citizens, than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty, to enjoy civil advantages; so we must sacrifice some civil liberties, for the advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire. But in all fair dealings the thing bought must bear some proportion to the purchase paid. None will barter away the immediate jewel of his soul. Though a great house is apt to make slaves haughty, yet it is purchasing a part of the artificial importance of a great empire too dear, to pay for it all essential rights, and all the intrinsic dignity of human nature. None of us who would not risk his life, rather than fall under a government purely arbitrary. But, although there are some among us who think our constitution wants many improvements, to make it a complete system of liberty, perhaps none who are of that opinion would think it right to aim at such improvement, by disturbing his country, and risking every thing that is dear to him. In every arduous enterprise, we consider what we are to lose, as well as what we are to gain; and the more and better stake of liberty every people possess, the less they will hazard in a vain attempt to make it more. These are *the cords of man*. Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest; and not on metaphysical speculations. Aristotle, the great master of reasoning, cautions us, and with great weight and propriety, against this species of delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments, as the most fallacious of all sophistry.

The Americans will have no interest contrary to the grandeur and glory of England, when they are not oppressed by the weight of it; and they will rather be inclined to respect the acts of a superintending legislature; when they see them the acts of that power, which is itself the security, not the rival, of their secondary importance. In this assurance, my mind most perfectly acquiesces; and I confess, I feel not the least alarm, from the discontents which are to arise, from putting people at their ease; nor do I apprehend the destruction of this empire, from giving, by an act of free grace and indulgence, to two millions of my fellow-citizens, some share of those rights, upon which I have always been taught to value myself.

It is said, indeed, that this power of granting, vested in American assemblies, would dissolve the unity of the empire; which was preserved, entire, although Wales, and Chester, and Durham, were added to it. Truly, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what this unity means; nor has it ever been heard of, that I know, in the constitutional policy of this country. The very idea of subordination of parts, excludes this notion of simple and undivided unity. England is the head; but she is not the head and the members too. Ireland has ever had from the beginning a separate, but not an independent, legislature; which, far from distracting, promoted the union of the whole. Every thing was sweetly and harmoniously disposed through both islands for the conservation of English dominion, and the communication of English liberties. I do not see that the same principles

might not be carried into twenty islands, and with the same good effect. This is my model with regard to America, as far as the internal circumstances of the two countries are the same. I know no other unity of this empire, than I can draw from its example during these periods, when it seemed to my poor understanding more united than it is now, or than it is likely to be by the present methods.

But since I speak of these methods, I recollect, Mr. Speaker, almost too late, that I promised, before I finished, to say something of the proposition of the noble lord* on the floor, which has been so lately received, and stands on your journals. I must be deeply concerned, whenever it is my misfortune to continue a difference with the majority of this house. But as the reasons for that difference are my apology for thus troubling you, suffer me to state them in a very few words. I shall compress them into as small a body as I possibly can, having already debated that matter at large, when the question was before the committee.

First, then, I cannot admit that proposition of a ransom by auction;—because it is a mere project. It is a thing new; unheard of; supported by no experience; justified by no analogy; without example of our ancestors, or root in the constitution.

It is neither regular parliamentary taxation, nor colony grant. *Experimentum in corpore vili*, is a good rule, which will ever make me adverse to any trial of experiments on what is certainly the most valuable of all subjects; the peace of this empire.

Secondly, it is an experiment which must be fatal in the end to our constitution. For what is it but a scheme for taxing the colonies in the anti-chamber of the noble lord and his successors? To settle the quotas and proportions in this house, is clearly impossible. You, Sir, may flatter yourself, you shall sit a state auctioneer, with your hammer in your hand, and knock down to each colony as it bids. But to settle (on the plan laid down by the noble lord) the true proportional payment for four or five and twenty governments, according to the absolute and the relative wealth of each, and according to the British proportion of wealth and burthen, is a wild and chimerical notion. This new taxation must therefore come in by the back-door of the constitution. Each quota must be brought to this house ready formed; you can neither add nor alter. You must register it. You can do nothing further. For on what grounds can you deliberate either before or after the proposition? You cannot hear the counsel for all these provinces, quarrelling each on its own quantity of payment, and its proportion to others. If you should attempt it, the committee of provincial ways and means, or by whatever other name it will delight to be called, must swallow up all the time of parliament.

Thirdly, it does not give satisfaction to the complaint of the colonies. They complain, that they are taxed without their consent; you answer, that you will fix the sum at which they shall be taxed. That is, you give them the very grievance for the remedy. You tell them, indeed, that you will leave the mode to themselves. I really beg pardon: it gives me pain to mention it; but you must be sensible that you will not perform this part of the compact. For, suppose the colonies were to lay the duties which furnished their contingent, upon the importation of your manufactures; you know you would never suffer such a tax to be laid. You know too, that you would not suffer many other modes of taxation. So that, when you come to explain yourself, it will be found, that you will neither leave to themselves the quantum nor the mode; nor indeed any thing. The whole is delusion from one end to the other.

Fourthly, this method of ransom by auction unless it be *universally* accepted, will plunge you into great and inextricable difficulties. In what year of our Lor dare the proportions of payments to be settled? To say nothing of the impossibility that colony agents should have general powers of taxing the colonies at their discretion; consider, I implore you, that the communication by special messages, and orders between these agents and their constituents on each variation of the case, when the parties come to contend together, and to dispute on their relative proportions, will be a matter of delay, perplexity, and confusion, that never can have an end.

If all the colonies do not appear at the outcry, what is the condition of those assemblies who offer, by themselves or their agents, to tax themselves up to your ideas of their proportion? The refractory colonies, who refuse all composition, will remain taxed only to your old impositions, which, however grievous in principle, are trifling as to production. The obedient colonies in this scheme are heavily taxed; the refractory remain unburthened. What will you do? Will you lay new and heavier taxes by parliament on the disobedient? Pray consider in what way you can do it. You are perfectly convinced that in the way of tax-

* Lord North.

ing you can do nothing but at the ports. Now suppose it is Virginia that refuses to appear at your auction, while Maryland and North Carolina bid handsomely for their ransom, and are taxed to your quota; How will you put these colonies on a par? Will you tax the tobacco of Virginia? If you do, you give its death-wound to your English revenue at home, and to one of the very greatest articles of your foreign trade. If you tax the import of that rebellious colony, what do you tax but your own manufactures, or the goods of some other obedient, and already well taxed colony? Who has said one word on this labyrinth of detail, which bewilders you more and more as you enter into it? Who has presented, who can present you, with a clue to lead you out of it? I think, Sir, it is impossible, that you should not recollect that the colony bounds are so implicated in one another (you know it by your other experiments in the bill for prohibiting the New England fishery) that you can lay no possible restraints on almost any of them which may not be presently eluded, if you do not confound the innocent with the guilty, and burthen those whom, upon every principle, you ought to exonerate. He must be grossly ignorant of America, who thinks, that, without falling into this confusion of all rules of equity and policy, you can restrain any single colony, especially Virginia and Maryland, the central and most important of them all.

Let it also be considered, that, either in the present confusion you settle a permanent contingent, which will and must be trifling; and then you have no effectual revenue: or you change the quota at every exigency; and then on every new reparation you will have a new quarrel.

Reflect besides, that when you have fixed a quota for every colony, you have not provided for prompt and punctual payment. Suppose one, two, five, ten years arrears. You cannot issue a treasury extent against the failing colony. You must make new Boston port bills, new restraining laws, new acts for dragging men to England for trial. You must send out new fleets, new armies. All is to begin again. From this day forward the empire is never to know an hour's tranquillity. An intestine fire will be kept alive in the bowels of the colonies, which one time or other must consume this whole empire. I allow indeed that the empire of Germany raises her revenue and her troops by quotas and contingents; but the revenue of the empire, and the army of the empire, is the worst revenue, and the worst army, in the world.

Instead of a standing revenue, you will therefore have a perpetual quarrel. Indeed the noble lord, who proposed this project of a ransom by auction, seemed himself to be of that opinion. His project was rather designed for breaking the union of the colonies, than for establishing a revenue. He confessed, he apprehended that his proposal would not be to *their taste*. I say, this scheme of disunion seems to be at the bottom of the project; for I will not suspect that the noble lord meant nothing but merely to delude the nation by an airy phantom which he never intended to realize. But whatever his views may be; as I propose the peace and union of the colonies as the very foundation of my plan, it cannot accord with one whose foundation is perpetual discord.

Compare the two. This I offer to give you is plain and simple. The other full of perplexed and intricate mazes. This is mild; that harsh. This is found by experience effectual for its purposes; the other is a new project. This is universal; the other calculated for certain colonies only. This is immediate in its conciliatory operation; the other remote, contingent, full of hazard. Mine is what becomes the dignity of a ruling people; gratuitous, unconditional, and not held out as matter of bargain and sale. I have done my duty in proposing it to you. I have indeed tired you by a long discourse; but this is the misfortune of those to whose influence nothing will be conceded, and who must win every inch of their ground by argument. You have heard me with goodness. May you decide with wisdom! For my part, I feel my mind greatly disburthened by what I have done to-day. I have been the less fearful of trying your patience, because on this subject I mean to spare it altogether in future. I have this comfort, that in every stage of the American affairs, I have steadily opposed the measures that have produced the confusion, and may bring on the destruction, of this empire. I now go so far as to risk a proposal of my own. If I cannot give peace to my country; I give it to my conscience.

But what (says the financier) is peace to us without money? Your plan gives us no revenue. No! But it does—For it secures to the subject the power of REFUSAL; the first of all revenues. Experience is a cheat, and fact a liar, if this power in the subject of proportioning his grant, or of not granting at all, has not been found the richest mine of revenue ever discovered by the skill or by the fortune of man. It does not indeed vote you

£.152,750: 11: 2¾ths, nor any other paltry limited sum.—But it gives the strong box itself, the fund, the bank, from whence only revenues can arise among a people sensible of freedom: *Posita luditur area.* Cannot you in England; cannot you at this time of day; cannot you, a house of commons, trust to the principle which has raised so mighty a revenue, and accumulated a debt of near 140 millions in this country? Is this principle to be true in England, and false every where else? Is it not true in Ireland! Has it not hitherto been true in the colonies? Why should you presume, that, in any country, a body duly constituted for any function, will neglect to perform its duty, and abdicate its trust? Such a presumption would go against all governments in all modes. But, in truth, this dread of penury of supply, from a free assembly, has no foundation in nature. For, first, observe, that, besides the desire which all men have naturally of supporting the honour of their own government; that sense of dignity, and that security to property, which ever attends freedom, has a tendency to increase the stock of the free community. Most may be taken where most is accumulated. And what is the soil or climate where experience has not uniformly proved, that the voluntary flow of heaped-up plenty, bursting from the weight of its own rich luxuriance, has ever run with a more copious stream of revenue, than could be squeezed from the dry husks of oppressed indigence, by the straining of all the politic machinery in the world.

Next we know, that parties must ever exist in a free country. We know too, that the emulations of such parties, their contradictions, their reciprocal necessities, their hopes, and their fears, must send them all in their turns to him that holds the balance of the state. The parties are the gamesters; but government keeps the table, and is sure to be the winner in the end. When this game is played, I really think it is more to be feared, that the people will be exhausted, than that government will not be supplied. Whereas, whatever is got by acts of absolute power ill obeyed, because odious, or by contracts ill kept, because constrained; will be narrow, feeble, uncertain, and precarious. "*Ease would retract vows made in pain, as violent and void.*"

I, for one, protest against compounding our demands: I declare against compounding, for a poor limited sum, the immense, evergrowing, eternal debt, which is due to generous government from protected freedom. And so may I speed in the great object I propose to you, as I think it would not only be an act of injustice, but would be the worst œconomy in the world, to compel the colonies to a sum certain, either in the way of ransom, or in the way of compulsory compact.

But to clear up my ideas on this subject—a revenue from America transmitted hither—do not delude yourselves—you never can receive it—No, not a shilling. We have experience that from remote countries it is not to be expected. If, when you attempted to extract revenue from Bengal, you were obliged to return in loan what you had taken in imposition; what can you expect from North America? for certainly, if there ever was a country qualified to produce wealth, it is India; or an institution fit for the transmission, it is the East-India Company. America has none of these aptitudes. If America gives you taxable objects, on which you lay your duties here, and gives you, at the same time, a surplus by a foreign sale of her commodities to pay the duties on these objects which you tax at home, she has performed her part to the British revenue. But with regard to her own internal establishments; she may, I doubt not she will, contribute in moderation. I say in moderation; for she ought not to be permitted to exhaust herself. She ought to be reserved to a war; the weight of which, with the enemies that we are most likely to have, must be considerable in her quarter of the globe. There she may serve you, and serve you essentially.

For that service, for all service, whether of revenue, trade, or empire, my trust is in her interest in the British constitution. My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties, which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government;—they will cling and grapple to you; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood, that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another; that these two things may exist without any mutual relation; the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened; and every thing hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have;

the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have any where. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond, which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire. Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion, that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies, every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does every thing for us here in England? Do you imagine then, that it is the land tax act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply, which gives you your army? or that it is the mutiny bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! Surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience, without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth every thing, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our places as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America, with the old warning of the church, *Sursum corda!* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire; and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests; not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness, of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all that it is; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.

In full confidence of this unalterable truth, I now (*quod felix faustumque sit*)—lay the first stone of the temple of peace; and I move you,

"That the colonies and plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any knights and burgesses, or others, to represent them in the high court of parliament."

Upon this resolution, the previous question was put, and carried;—for the previous question 270, against it 78.

As the propositions were opened separately in the body of the speech, the reader perhaps may wish to see the whole of them together, in the form in which they were moved for.

"MOVED,

"That the colonies and plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any knights and burgesses, or others, to represent them in the high court of parliament."

"That the said colonies and plantations have been made liable to, and bounden by, several subsidies, payments, rates, and taxes, given and granted by parliament; though the said colonies and plantations have not their knights and burgesses, in the said high court

of parliament, of their own election, to represent the condition of their country, *by lack whereof, they have been oftentimes touched and grieved by subsidies given, granted, and assented to, in the said court, in a manner prejudicial to the common wealth, quietness, rest, and peace, of the subjects inhabiting within the same.*"

"That, from the distance of the said colonies, and from other circumstances, no method hath hitherto been devised for procuring a representation in parliament for the said colonies."

"That each of the said colonies hath within itself a body, chosen, in part or in the whole, by the freemen, freeholders, or other free inhabitants thereof, commonly called the general assembly, or general court; with powers legally to raise, levy, and assess, according to the several usages of such colonies, duties and taxes towards defraying all sorts of public services."*

"That the said general assemblies, general courts, or other bodies, legally qualified as aforesaid, have at sundry times freely granted several large subsidies and public aids for his majesty's service, according to their abilities, when required thereto by letter from one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state; and that their right to grant the same, and their cheerfulness and sufficiency in the said grants, have been at sundry times acknowledged by parliament."

"That it hath been found by experience, that the manner of granting the said supplies and aids, by the said general assemblies, hath been more agreeable to the inhabitants of the said colonies, and more beneficial and conducive to the public service, than the mode of giving and granting aids and subsidies in parliament to be raised and paid in the said colonies."

"That it may be proper to repeal an act, made in the 7th year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for allowing a drawback of the duties of customs, upon the exportation from this kingdom, of coffee and cocoa-nuts, of the produce of the said colonies or plantations; for discontinuing the drawbacks payable on china earthenware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the said colonies and plantations."

"That it may be proper to repeal an act, made in the 14th year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, An act to discontinue, in such manner, and for such time, as are therein mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading or shipping of goods, wares and merchandise, at the town, and within the harbour, of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts' Bay, in North America."

"That it may be proper to repeal an act, made in the 14th year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, An act for the impartial administration of justice, in cases of persons questioned for any acts done by them in the execution of the law, or for the suppression of riots and tumults, in the province of Massachusetts' Bay, in New England."

"That it is proper to repeal an act, made in the 14th year of the reign of his present majesty, intituled, An act for the better regulating the government of the province of Massachusetts' Bay, in New England."

"That it is proper to explain and amend an act, made in the 35th year of the reign of King Henry VIII. intituled, An act for the trial of treasons committed out of the King's dominions."

"That, from the time when the general assembly, or general court, of any colony or plantation, in North America, shall have appointed, by act of assembly duly confirmed, a settled salary to the offices of the chief justice and judges of the superiour courts, it may be proper that the said chief justice and other judges of the superiour courts of such colony shall hold his and their office and offices during their good behaviour; and shall not be removed therefrom, but when the said removal shall be adjudged by his majesty in council, upon a hearing on complaint from the general assembly, or on a complaint from the governour, or council, or the house of representatives, severally, of the colony in which the said chief justice and other judges have exercised the said office."

"That it may be proper to regulate the courts of admiralty, or vice-admiralty, authorized by the 15th chapter of the 4th of George III. in such a manner, as to make the same more commodious to those who sue, or are sued, in the said courts; *and to provide for the more decent maintenance of the judges of the same.*"

* The first four motions and the last had the previous question put on them. The others were negatived.

The words in Italics, were, by an amendment that was carried, left out of the motion; which will appear in the journals, though it is not the practice to insert such amendments in the votes.

A LETTER

FROM MR. BURKE, TO JOHN FARR AND JOHN HARRIS, ESQRS. SHERIFFS OF THE CITY OF BRISTOL, ON THE AFFAIRS OF AMERICA. 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE the honour of sending you the two last acts which have been passed with regard to the troubles in America. These acts are similar to all the rest which have been made on the same subject. They operate by the same principle; and they are derived from the very same policy. I think they complete the number of that sort of statutes to nine. It affords no matter for very pleasing reflection, to observe, that our subjects diminish, as our laws increase.

If I have the misfortune of differing with some of my fellow-citizens on this great and arduous subject, it is no small consolation to me, that I do not differ from you. With you, I am perfectly united. We are heartily agreed in our detestation of a civil war. We have ever expressed the most unqualified disapprobation of all the steps which have led to it, and of all those which tend to prolong it. And I have no doubt that we feel exactly the same emotions of grief and shame on all its miserable consequences; whether they appear, on the one side or the other, in the shape of victories or defeats, of captures made from the English on the continent, or from the English in these islands; of legislative regulations which subvert the liberties of our brethren, or which undermine our own.

Of the first of these statutes (that for the letter of marque) I shall say little. Exceptionable as it may be, and as I think it is in some particulars, it seems the natural, perhaps necessary result of the measures we have taken, and the situation we are in. The other (for a partial suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*) appears to me of a much deeper malignity. During its progress through the house of commons, it has been amended, so as to express more distinctly than at first it did, the avowed sentiments of those who framed it: and the main ground of my exception to it is, because it does express, and does carry into execution, purposes which appear to me so contradictory to all the principles, not only of the constitutional policy of Great Britain, but even of that species of hostile justice, which no asperity of war wholly extinguishes in the minds of a civilized people.

It seems to have in view two capital objects; the first, to enable administration to confine, as long as it shall think proper, those, whom that act is pleased to qualify by the name of *pirates*. Those so qualified, I understand to be, the commanders and mariners of such privateers and ships of war belonging to the colonies, as in the course of this unhappy contest may fall into the hands of the crown. They are therefore to be detained in prison, under the criminal description of piracy, to a future trial and ignominious punishment, whenever circumstances shall make it convenient to execute vengeance on them, under the colour of that odious and infamous offence.

To this first purpose of the law, I have no small dislike; because the act does not (as all laws, and all equitable transactions ought to do) fairly describe its object. The persons, who make a naval war upon us, in consequence of the present troubles, may be rebels; but to call and treat them as pirates, is confounding, not only the natural distinction of things, but the order of crimes; which, whether by putting them from a higher part of the scale to the lower, or from the lower to the higher, is never done without dangerously disordering the whole frame of jurisprudence. Though piracy may be, in the eye of the law, a *less* offence than treason; yet as both are, in effect, punished with the same death, the same forfeiture, and the same corruption of blood, I never would take from any fellow creature whatever, any sort of advantage which he may derive to his safety from the pity of mankind, or to his reputation from their general feelings, by degrading his offence, when I cannot soften his punishment. The general sense of mankind tells

me, that those offences, which may possibly arise from mistaken virtue, are not in the class of infamous actions. Lord Coke, the oracle of the English law, conforms to that general sense where he says, that "those things which are of the highest criminality, may be of the least disgrace." The act prepares a sort of masked proceeding, not honourable to the justice of the kingdom, and by no means necessary for its safety. I cannot enter into it. If Lord Balmerino, in the last rebellion, had driven off the cattle of twenty clans, I should have thought it would have been a scandalous and low juggle, utterly unworthy of the manliness of an English judicature, to have tried him for felony as a stealer of cows.

Besides, I must honestly tell you, that I could not vote for, or countenance in any way, a statute, which stigmatizes with the crime of piracy, these men, whom an act of parliament had previously put out of the protection of the law. When the legislature of this kingdom had ordered all their ships and goods, for the mere new-created offence of exercising trade, to be divided as a spoil among the seamen of the navy,—to consider the necessary reprisal of an unhappy, proscribed, interdicted people, as the crime of piracy, would have appeared in any other legislature than ours, a strain of the most insulting and most unnatural cruelty and injustice. I assure you, I never remember to have heard of any thing like it in any time or country.

The second professed purpose of the act is to detain in England for trial, those who shall commit high treason in America.

That you may be enabled to enter into the true spirit of the present law, it is necessary, gentlemen, to apprize you, that there is an act, made so long ago as in the reign of Henry the Eighth, before the existence or thought of any English colonies in America, for the trial in this kingdom of treasons committed out of the realm. In the year 1769, parliament thought proper to acquaint the crown with their construction of that act in a formal address, wherein they intreated his majesty, to cause persons, charged with high treason in America, to be brought into this kingdom for trial. By this act of Henry the Eighth, *so construed and so applied*, almost all that is substantial and beneficial in a trial by jury, is taken away from the subject in the colonies. This is however saying too little; for to try a man under that act is, in effect, to condemn him unheard. A person is brought hither in the dungeon of a ship's hold; thence he is vomited into a dungeon on land; loaded with irons, unfurnished with money, unsupported by friends, three thousand miles from all means of calling upon or confronting evidence, where no one local circumstance that tends to detect perjury, can possibly be judged of;—such a person may be executed according to form, but he can never be tried according to justice.

I therefore could never reconcile myself to the bill I send you; which is expressly provided to remove all inconveniencies from the establishment of a mode of trial, which has ever appeared to me most unjust and most unconstitutional. Far from removing the difficulties which impede the execution of so mischievous a project, I would heap new difficulties upon it, if it were in my power. All the ancient, honest juridical principles and institutions of England are so many clogs to check and retard the headlong course of violence and oppression. They were invented for this one good purpose; that what was not just should not be convenient. Convinced of this, I would leave things as I found them. The old, cool-headed, general law, is as good as any deviation dictated by present heat.

I could see no fair justifiable expedience pleaded to favour this new suspension of the liberty of the subject. If the English in the colonies can support the independency, to which they have been unfortunately driven, I suppose nobody has such a fanatical zeal for the criminal justice of Henry the Eighth, that he will contend for executions which must be retaliated tenfold on his own friends; or who has conceived so strange an idea of English dignity, as to think the defeats in America compensated by the triumphs of Tyburn. If on the contrary, the colonies are reduced to the obedience of the crown, there must be under that authority, tribunals in the country itself, fully competent to administer justice on all offenders. But if there are not, and that we must suppose a thing so humiliating to our government, as that all this vast continent should unanimously concur in thinking, that no ill fortune can convert resistance to the royal authority into a criminal act, we may call the effect of our victory peace, or obedience, or what we will; but the war is not ended; the hostile mind continues in full vigour, and it continues under a worse form. If your peace be nothing more than a sullen pause from arms; if their quiet be nothing but the meditation of revenge, where smitten pride smarting from its wounds, festers into new rancour, neither the act of Henry the Eighth, nor its handmaid of this reign, will answer any wise end of policy or justice. For if the bloody fields, which they saw and felt, are not sufficient to

subdue the reason of America, (to use the expressive phrase of a great lord in office,) it is not the judicial slaughter, which is made in another hemisphere against their universal sense of justice, that will ever reconcile them to the British government.

I take it for granted, gentlemen, that we sympathize in a proper horrour of all punishment further than as it serves for an example. To whom then does the example of an execution in England for this American rebellion apply? Remember, you are told every day, that the present is a contest between the two countries; and that we in England are at war for *our own* dignity against our rebellious children. Is this true? If it be, it is surely among such rebellious children that examples for disobedience should be made, to be in any degree instructive: for who ever thought of teaching parents their duty by an example from the punishment of an undutiful son? As well might the execution of a fugitive negro in the plantations, be considered as a lesson to teach masters humanity to their slaves. Such executions may indeed satiate our revenge; they may harden our hearts, and puff us up with pride and arrogance. Alas! this is not instruction!

If any thing can be drawn from such examples by a parity of the case, it is to shew, how deep their crime and how heavy their punishment will be who shall at any time dare to resist a distant power actually disposing of their property, without their voice or consent to the disposition; and overturning their franchises without charge or hearing. God forbid that England should ever read this lesson written in the blood of *any* of her offspring!

War is at present carried on between the king's natural and foreign troops, on one side, and the English in America on the other, upon the usual footing of other wars; and accordingly an exchange of prisoners has been regularly made from the beginning. If notwithstanding this hitherto equal procedure, upon some prospect of ending the war with success, (which however may be delusive,) administration prepares to act against those as *traitors* who remain in their hands at the end of the troubles, in my opinion we shall exhibit to the world as indecent a piece of injustice as ever civil fury has produced. If the prisoners who have been exchanged, have not by that exchange been *virtually pardoned*, the cartel (whether avowed or understood) is a cruel fraud; for you have received the life of a man, and you ought to return a life for it, or there is no parity or fairness in the transaction.

If on the other hand, we admit, that they, who are actually exchanged are pardoned, but contend that you may justly reserve for vengeance, those who remain unexchanged; then this unpleasant and unhandsome consequence will follow; that you judge of the delinquency of men merely by the time of their guilt, and not by the heinousness of it; and you make fortune and accidents, and not the moral qualities of human action, the rule of your justice.

These strange incongruities must ever perplex those, who confound the unhappiness of civil dissensions, with the crime of treason. Whenever a rebellion really and truly exists, which is as easily known in fact, as it is difficult to define in words, government has not entered into such military conventions; but has ever declined all intermediate treaty, which should put rebels in possession of the law of nations with regard to war. Commanders would receive no benefits at their hands, because they could make no return for them. Who has ever heard of capitulation, and parole of honour, and exchange of prisoners in the late rebellions in this kingdom? The answer to all demands of that sort was, "we can engage for nothing; you are at the king's pleasure." We ought to remember, that if our present enemies be, in reality and truth, rebels, the king's generals have no right to release them upon any conditions whatsoever; and they are themselves answerable to the law, and as much in want of a pardon for doing so, as the rebels whom they release.

Lawyers, I know, cannot make the distinction, for which I contend; because they have their strict rule to go by. But legislators ought to do what lawyers cannot; for they have no other rules to bind them, but the great principles of reason and equity, and the general sense of mankind. These they are bound to obey and follow; and rather to enlarge and enlighten law by the liberality of legislative reason, than to fetter and bind their higher capacity by the narrow constructions of subordinate artificial justice. If we had adverted to this, we never could consider the convulsions of a great empire, not disturbed by a little disseminated faction, but divided by whole communities and provinces, and entire legal representatives of a people, as fit matter of discussion under a commission of Oyer and Terminer. It is as opposite to reason and prudence, as it is to humanity and justice.

This act, proceeding on these principles, that is, preparing to end the present troubles by a trial of one sort of hostility, under the name of piracy, and of another by the name of treason, and executing the act of Henry the Eighth

according to a new and unconstitutional interpretation, I have thought evil and dangerous, even though the instruments of effecting such purposes had been merely of a neutral quality.

But it really appears to me, that the means which this act employs are, at least, as exceptionable as the end. Permit me to open myself a little upon this subject, because it is of importance to me, when I am obliged to submit to the power without acquiescing in the reason of an act of legislature, that I should justify my dissent, by such arguments as may be supposed to have weight with a sober man.

The main operative regulation of the act is to suspend the common law, and the statute *Habeas Corpus*, (the sole securities either for liberty or justice,) with regard to all those who have been out of the realm, or on the high seas, within a given time. The rest of the people, as I understand, are to continue as they stood before.

I confess, gentlemen, that this appears to me, as bad in the principle, and far worse in its consequence, than an universal suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act; and the limiting qualification, instead of taking out the sting, does in my humble opinion sharpen and envenom it to a greater degree. Liberty, if I understand it at all, is a *general* principle, and the clear right of all the subjects within the realm, or of none. Partial freedom seems to me a most invidious mode of slavery. But unfortunately, it is the kind of slavery the most easily admitted in times of civil discord; for parties are but too apt to forget their own future safety in their desire of sacrificing their enemies. People, without much difficulty, admit the entrance of that injustice of which they are not to be the immediate victims. In times of high proceeding it is never the faction of the predominant power that is in danger; for no tyranny chastises its own instruments. It is the obnoxious and the suspected who want the protection of law; and there is nothing to bridle the partial violence of state factions, but this; "that whenever an act is made for a cessation of law and justice, the whole people should be universally subjected to the same suspension of their franchises." The alarm of such a proceeding would then be universal. It would operate as a sort of *Call of the nation*. It would become every man's immediate and instant concern to be made very sensible of *the absolute necessity* of this total eclipse of liberty. They would more carefully advert to every renewal, and more powerfully resist it. These great determined measures are not commonly so dangerous to freedom. They are marked with too strong lines to slide into use. No plea, nor pretence of *inconvenience or evil example* (which must in their nature be daily and ordinary incidents) can be admitted as a reason for such mighty operations. But the true danger is, when liberty is nibbled away, for expedients, and by parts. The *Habeas Corpus* act supposes, contrary to the genius of most other laws, that the lawful magistrate may see particular men with a malignant eye, and it provides for that identical case. But when men, in particular descriptions, marked out by the magistrate himself, are delivered over by parliament to this possible malignity, it is not the *Habeas Corpus* that is occasionally suspended, but its spirit that is mistaken, and its principle that is subverted. Indeed nothing is security to any individual but the common interest of all.

This act therefore, has this distinguished evil in it, that it is the first *partial* suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* that has been made. The precedent, which is always of very great importance, is now established. For the first time a distinction is made among the people within this realm. Before this act, every man putting his foot on English ground, every stranger owing only a local and temporary allegiance, even negro slaves who had been sold in the colonies and under an act of parliament, became as free as every other man who breathed the same air with them. Now a line is drawn, which may be advanced further and further at pleasure, on the same argument of mere expedience, on which it was first described. There is no equality among us; we are not fellow-citizens, if the mariner who lands on the quay, does not rest on as firm legal ground as the merchant who sits in his compting-house. Other laws may injure the community, this dissolves it. As things now stand, every man in the West Indies, every one inhabitant of three unoffending provinces on the continent, every person coming from the East Indies, every gentleman who has travelled for his health or education, every mariner who has navigated the seas, is, for no other offence, under a temporary proscription. Let any of these facts (now become presumptions of guilt) be proved against him, and the bare suspicion of the crown puts him out of the law. It is even by no means clear to me, whether the negative proof does not lie upon the person apprehended on suspicion, to the subversion of all justice.

I have not debated against this bill in its progress through the house; because it would have been vain to oppose, and impossible to correct it. It is some time since I have been

clearly convinced, that in the present state of things all opposition to any measures proposed by ministers, where the name of America appears, is vain and frivolous. You may be sure that I do not speak of my opposition, which in all circumstances must be so; but that of men of the greatest wisdom and authority in the nation. Every thing proposed against America is supposed of course to be in favour of Great Britain. Good and ill success are equally admitted as reasons for persevering in the present methods. Several very prudent, and very well-intentioned persons were of opinion, that during the prevalence of such dispositions, all struggle rather inflamed than lessened the distemper of the public counsels. Finding such resistance to be considered as factious by most within doors, and by very many without, I cannot conscientiously support what is against my opinion, nor prudently contend with what I know is irresistible. Preserving my principles unshaken, I reserve my activity for rational endeavours; and I hope that my past conduct has given sufficient evidence, that if I am a single day from my place, it is not owing to indolence or love of dissipation. The slightest hope of doing good is sufficient to recall me to what I quitted with regret. In declining for some time my usual strict attendance, I do not in the least condemn the spirit of those gentlemen, who, with a just confidence in their abilities, (in which I claim a sort of share from my love and admiration of them,) were of opinion that their exertions in this desperate case might be of some service. They thought, that by contracting the sphere of its application, they might lessen the malignity of an evil principle. Perhaps they were in the right. But when my opinion was so very clearly to the contrary, for the reasons I have just stated, I am sure my attendance would have been ridiculous.

I must add in further explanation of my conduct, that far from softening the features of such a principle, and thereby removing any part of the popular odium or natural terrours attending it, I should be sorry, that any thing framed in contradiction to the spirit of our constitution did not instantly produce in fact, the grossest of the evils, with which it was pregnant in its nature. It is by lying dormant a long time, or being at first very rarely exercised, that arbitrary power steals upon a people. On the next unconstitutional act, all the fashionable world will be ready to say—Your prophecies are ridiculous, your fears are vain, you see how little of the mischiefs which you formerly foreboded are come to pass. Thus, by degrees, that artful softening of all arbitrary power, the alleged infrequency or narrow extent of its operation, will be received as a sort of aphorism—and Mr. *Hume* will not be singular in telling us, that the felicity of mankind is no more disturbed by it, than by earthquakes or thunder, or the other more unusual accidents of nature.

The act of which I speak is among the fruits of the American war; a war in my humble opinion productive of many mischiefs, of a kind which distinguish it from all others. Not only our policy is deranged, and our empire distracted, but our laws and our legislative spirit appear to have been totally perverted by it. We have made war on our colonies, not by arms only, but by laws. As hostility and law are not very concordant ideas, every step we have taken in this business, has been made by trampling on some maxim of justice, or some capital principle of wise government. What precedents were established, and what principles overturned, (I will not say of English privilege, but of general justice,) in the Boston Port, the Massachusetts' Charter, the Military Bill, and all that long array of hostile acts of parliament, by which the war with America has been begun and supported! Had the principles of any of these acts been first exerted on English ground, they would probably have expired as soon as they touched it. But by being removed from our persons, they have rooted in our laws; and the latest posterity will taste the fruits of them.

Nor is it the worse effect of this unnatural contention, that our *laws* are corrupted. Whilst *manners* remain entire, they will correct the vices of law, and soften it at length to their own temper. But we have to lament, that in most of the late proceedings we see very few traces of that generosity, humanity, and dignity of mind which formerly characterised this nation. War suspends the rules of moral obligation, and what is long suspended is in danger of being totally abrogated. Civil wars strike deepest of all into the manners of the people. They vitiate their politics; they corrupt their morals; they pervert even the natural taste and relish of equity and justice. By teaching us to consider our fellow-citizens in a hostile light, the whole body of our nation becomes gradually less dear to us. The very names of affection and kindred, which were the bond of charity whilst we agreed, become new incentives to hatred and rage, when the communion of our country is dissolved. We may flatter ourselves that we shall not fall into this misfortune. But we have no charter of exemp-

tion, that I know of, from the ordinary frailties of our nature.

What but that blindness of heart which arises from the phrenzy of civil contention, could have made any persons conceive the present situation of the British affairs as an object of triumph to themselves, or of congratulation to their sovereign? Nothing surely could be more lamentable to those who remember the flourishing days of this kingdom, than to see the insane joy of several unhappy people, amid the sad spectacle which our affairs and conduct exhibit to the scorn of Europe. We behold (and it seems some people rejoice in beholding) our native land, which used to sit the envied arbiter of all her neighbours, reduced to a servile dependence on their mercy; acquiescing in assurances of friendship which she does not trust; complaining of hostilities which she dares not resent; deficient to her allies; lofty to her subjects, and submissive to her enemies; whilst the liberal government of this free nation is supported by the hireling sword of German boors and vassals; and three millions of the subjects of Great Britain are seeking for protection to English privileges in the arms of France!

These circumstances appear to me more like shocking prodigies, than natural changes in human affairs. Men of firmer minds may see them without staggering or astonishment.—Some may think them matters of congratulation and complimentary addresses; but I trust your candour will be so indulgent to my weakness, as not to have the worse opinion of me for my declining to participate in this joy; and my rejecting all share whatsoever in such a triumph. I am too old, too stiff in my inveterate partialities, to be ready at all the fashionable evolutions of opinion. I scarcely know how to adapt my mind to the feelings with which the court gazettes mean to impress the people. It is not instantly that I can be brought to rejoice, when I hear of the slaughter and captivity of long lists of those names which have been familiar to my ears from my infancy, and to rejoice that they have fallen under the sword of strangers, whose barbarous appellations I scarcely know how to pronounce. The glory acquired at the White Plains by Colonel Rahl, has no charms for me; and I fairly acknowledge, that I have not yet learned to delight in finding Fort Kniphausen in the heart of the British dominions.

It might be some consolation for the loss of our old regards, if our reason were enlightened in proportion as our honest prejudices are removed. Wanting feelings for the honour of our country, we might then in cold blood be brought to think a little of our interests as individual citizens, and our private conscience as moral agents.

Indeed our affairs are in a bad condition. I do assure those gentlemen who have prayed for war, and obtained the blessing they have sought, that they are at this instant in very great straits. The abused wealth of this country continues a little longer to feed its distemper. As yet they, and their German allies of twenty hireling states, have contended only with the unprepared strength of our own infant colonies. But America is not subdued. Not one unattacked village which was originally adverse throughout that vast continent, has yet submitted from love or terrour. You have the ground you encamp on; and you have no more. The cantonments of your troops and your dominions are exactly of the same extent. You spread devastation, but you do not enlarge the sphere of authority.

The events of this war are of so much greater magnitude than those who either wished or feared it, ever looked for, that this alone ought to fill every considerate mind with anxiety and diffidence. Wise men often tremble at the very things which fill the thoughtless with security. For many reasons I do not choose to expose to public view, all the particulars of the state in which you stood with regard to foreign powers, during the whole course of the last year. Whether you are yet wholly out of danger from them, is more than I know, or than your rulers can divine. But even if I were certain of my safety, I could not easily forgive those who had brought me into the most dreadful perils, because by accidents, unforeseen by them or me, I have escaped.

Believe me, gentlemen, the way still before you is intricate, dark, and full of perplexed and treacherous mazes. Those who think they have the clue, may lead us out of this labyrinth. We may trust them as amply as we think proper; but as they have most certainly a call for all the reason which their stock can furnish, why should we think it proper to disturb its operation by inflaming their passions? I may be unable to lend an helping hand to those who direct the state; but I should be ashamed to make myself one of a noisy multitude to hollow and hearten them into doubtful and dangerous courses. A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood. He would feel some apprehension at being called to a tremendous account for engaging in so

deep a play, without any sort of knowledge of the game. It is no excuse for presumptuous ignorance, that it is directed by insolent passion. The poorest being that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression, is an object respectable in the eyes of God and man. But I cannot conceive any existence under heaven, (which in the depths of its wisdom tolerates all sorts of things,) that is more truly odious and disgusting, than an impotent helpless creature, without civil wisdom or military skill, without a consciousness of any other qualification for power but his servility to it, bloated with pride and arrogance, calling for battles which he is not to fight, contending for a violent dominion which he can never exercise, and satisfied to be himself mean and miserable, in order to render others contemptible and wretched.

If you and I find our talents not of the great and ruling kind, our conduct at least, is conformable to our faculties. No man's life pays the forfeit of our rashness. No desolate widow weeps tears of blood over our ignorance. Scrupulous and sober in a well grounded distrust of ourselves, we would keep in the port of peace and security; and perhaps in recommending to others something of the same diffidence, we should shew ourselves more charitable to their welfare, than injurious to their abilities.

There are many circumstances in the zeal shewn for civil war, which seem to discover but little of real magnanimity. The addressers offer their own persons, and they are satisfied with hiring Germans. They promise their private fortunes, and they mortgage their country. They have all the merit of volunteers, without risk of person or charge of contribution; and when the unfeeling arm of a foreign soldiery pours out their kindred blood like water, they exult and triumph as if they themselves had performed some notable exploit. I am really ashamed of the fashionable language which has been held for some time past; which to say the best of it, is full of levity. You know, that I allude to the general cry against the cowardice of the Americans, as if we despised them for not making the king's soldiery purchase the advantage they have obtained, at a dearer rate. It is not, gentlemen, it is not, to respect the dispensations of Providence, nor to provide any decent retreat in the mutability of human affairs. It leaves no medium between insolent victory and infamous defeat. It tends to alienate our minds further and further from our natural regards, and to make an eternal rent and schism in the British nation. Those who do not wish for such a separation, would not dissolve that cement of reciprocal esteem and regard, which can alone bind together the parts of this great fabric. It ought to be our wish, as it is our duty, not only to forbear this style of outrage ourselves, but to make every one as sensible as we can of the impropriety and unworthiness of the tempers which gave rise to it, and which designing men are labouring with such malignant industry to diffuse among us. It is our business to counteract them, if possible; if possible, to awake our natural regards; and to revive the old partiality to the English name. Without something of this kind I do not see how it is ever practicable really to reconcile with those, whose affection, after all, must be the surest hold of our government; and which is a thousand times more worth to us, than the mercenary zeal of all the circles of Germany.

I can well conceive a country completely overrun, and miserably wasted, without approaching in the least to settlement. In my apprehension, as long as English government is attempted to be supported over Englishmen by the sword alone, things will thus continue. I anticipate in my mind the moment of the final triumph of foreign military force. When that hour arrives, (for it may arrive,) then it is, that all this mass of weakness and violence will appear in its full light. If we should be expelled from America, the delusion of the partizans of military government might still continue. They might still feed their imaginations with the possible good consequences which might have attended success. Nobody could prove the contrary by facts. But in case the sword should do all that the sword can do, the success of their arms and the defeat of their policy, will be one and the same thing. You will never see any revenue from America. Some increase of the means of corruption, without ease of the public burthens, is the very best that can happen. Is it for this that we are at war; and in such a war?

As to the difficulties of laying once more the foundations of that government, which, for the sake of conquering what was our own, has been voluntarily and wantonly pulled down by a court faction here, I tremble to look at them. Has any of these gentlemen, who are so eager to govern all mankind, shewn himself possessed of the first qualification towards government, some knowledge of the object, and of the difficulties which occur in the task they have undertaken?

I assure you, that on the most prosperous issue of your arms, you will not be where you

stood, when you called in war to supply the defects of your political establishment. Nor would any disorder or disobedience to government which could arise from the most abject concession on our part, ever equal those which will be felt after the most triumphant violence. You have got all the intermediate evils of war into the bargain.

I think I know America. If I do not, my ignorance is incurable, for I have spared no pains to understand it; and I do most solemnly assure those of my constituents who put any sort of confidence in my industry and integrity, that every thing that has been done there has arisen from a total misconception of the object: that our means of originally holding America, that our means of reconciling with it after quarrel, of recovering it after separation, of keeping it after victory, did depend, and must depend, in their several stages and periods, upon a total renunciation of that unconditional submission, which has taken such possession of the minds of violent men. The whole of those maxims, upon which we have made and continued this war, must be abandoned. Nothing indeed (for I would not deceive you) can place us in our former situation. That hope must be laid aside. But there is a difference between bad and the worst of all. Terms relative to the cause of the war ought to be offered by the authority of parliament. An arrangement at home promising some security for them ought to be made. By doing this, without the least impairing of our strength, we add to the credit of our moderation, which in itself, is always strength more or less.

I know many have been taught to think, that moderation, in a case like this, is a sort of treason; and that all arguments for it are sufficiently answered by railing at rebels and rebellion, and by charging all the present or future miseries which we may suffer, on the resistance of our brethren. But I would wish them, in this grave matter, and if peace is not wholly removed from their hearts, to consider seriously, first, that to criminate and recriminate never yet was the road to reconciliation, in any difference among men. In the next place, it would be right to reflect, that the American English (whom they may abuse, if they think it honourable to revile the absent) can, as things now stand, neither be provoked at our railing, or bettered by our instruction. All communication is cut off between us, but this we know with certainty, that though we cannot reclaim them, we may reform ourselves. If measures of peace are necessary, they must begin somewhere; and a conciliatory temper must precede and prepare every plan of reconciliation. Nor do I conceive that we suffer any thing by thus regulating our own minds. We are not disarmed by being disencumbered of our passions. Declaiming on rebellion never added a bayonet, or a charge of powder to your military force; but I am afraid that it has been the means of taking up many muskets against you.

This outrageous language, which has been encouraged and kept alive by every art, has already done incredible mischief. For a long time, even amid the desolations of war, and the insults of hostile laws daily accumulated on one another; the American leaders seem to have had the greatest difficulty in bringing up their people to a declaration of total independence. But the court gazette accomplished what the abettors of independence had attempted in vain. When that disingenuous compilation, and strange medley of railing and flattery, was adduced, as a proof of the united sentiments of the people of Great Britain, there was a great change throughout all America. The tide of popular affection, which had still set towards the parent country, begun immediately to turn; and to flow with great rapidity in a contrary course. Far from concealing these wild declarations of enmity, the author of the celebrated pamphlet which prepared the minds of the people for independence, insists largely on the multitude and the spirit of these addresses; and he draws an argument from them, which (if the fact were as he supposes) must be irresistible. For I never knew a writer on the theory of government so partial to authority, as not to allow, that the hostile mind of the rulers to their people, did fully justify a change of government; nor can any reason whatever be given, why one people should voluntarily yield any degree of preeminence to another, but on a supposition of great affection and benevolence towards them. Unfortunately your rulers, trusting to other things, took no notice of this great principle of connection. From the beginning of this affair, they have done all they could to alienate your minds from your own kindred; and if they could excite hatred enough in one of the parties towards the other, they seemed to be of opinion that they had gone half the way towards reconciling the quarrel.

I know it is said, that your kindness is only alienated on account of their resistance; and therefore if the colonies surrender at discretion, all sort of regard, and even much indulgence is meant towards them in future. But can

those who are partisans for continuing a war to enforce such a surrender, be responsible (after all that has passed) for such a future use of a power, that is bound by no compacts, and restrained by no terrour? Will they tell us what they call indulgencies? Do they not at this instant call the present war and all its horrours, a lenient and merciful proceeding?

No conqueror, that I ever heard of, has *professed* to make a cruel, harsh, and insolent use of his conquest. No! The man of the most declared pride, scarcely dares to trust his own heart, with this dreadful secret of ambition. But it will appear in its time; and no man who professes to reduce another to the insolent mercy of a foreign arm, ever had any sort of good-will towards him. The profession of kindness, with that sword in his hand, and that demand of surrender, is one of the most provoking acts of his hostility. I shall be told, that all this is lenient as against rebellious adversaries. But are the leaders of their faction more lenient to those who submit! Lord Howe and General Howe have powers under an act of parliament, to restore to the king's peace and to free trade any men, or district, which shall submit. Is this done? We have been over and over informed by the authorized gazette, that the city of New York, and the countries of Staten and Long Island have submitted voluntarily and cheerfully, and that many are very full of zeal to the cause of administration. Were they instantly restored to trade? Are they yet restored to it? Is not the benignity of two commissioners, naturally most humane and generous men, some way fettered by instructions, equally against their dispositions and the spirit of parliamentary faith; when Mr. Tryon, vaunting of the fidelity of the city in which he is governour, is obliged to apply to ministry for leave to protect the king's loyal subjects, and to grant to them (not the disputed rights and privileges of freedom) but the common rights of men, by the name of *graces?* Why do not the commissioners restore them on the spot? Were they not named as commissioners for that express purpose? But we see well enough to what the whole leads. The trade of America is to be dealt out in *private indulgencies and graces;* that is, in jobs to recompense the incendiaries of war. They will be informed of the proper time in which to send out their merchandise. From a national, the American trade is to be turned into a personal monopoly: and one set of merchants are to be rewarded for the pretended zeal, of which another set are the dupes; and thus between craft and credulity, the voice of reason is stifled; and all the misconduct, all the calamities of the war are covered and continued.

If I had not lived long enough to be little surprised at any thing, I should have been in some degree astonished at the continued rage of several gentlemen, who, not satisfied with carrying fire and sword into America, are animated nearly with the same fury against those neighbours of theirs, whose only crime it is, that they have charitably and humanely wished them to entertain more reasonable sentiments, and not always to sacrifice their interest to their passion. All this rage against unresisting dissent, convinces me, that at bottom, they are far from satisfied they are in the right. For what is it they would have? A war? They certainly have at this moment the blessing of something that is very like one; and if the war they enjoy at present be not sufficiently hot and extensive, they may shortly have it as warm and as spreading as their hearts can desire. Is it the force of the kingdom they call for? They have it already; and if they choose to fight their battles in their own person, nobody prevents their setting sail to America in the next transports. Do they think, that the service is stinted for want of liberal supplies? Indeed they complain without reason. The table of the house of commons will glut them, let their appetite for expense be never so keen. And I assure them further, that those who think with them in the house of commons are full as easy in the controul, as they are liberal in the vote of these expenses. If this be not supply or confidence sufficient, let them open their own private purse strings and give, from what is left to them, as largely and with as little care as they think proper.

Tolerated in their passions, let them learn not to persecute the moderation of their fellow-citizens. If all the world joined them in a full cry against rebellion, and were as hotly inflamed against the whole theory and enjoyment of freedom, as those who are the most factious for servitude, it could not in my opinion answer any one end whatsoever in this contest. The leaders of this war could not hire (to gratify their friends) one German more, than they do; or inspire him with less feeling for the persons, or less value for the privileges, of their revolted brethren. If we all adopted their sentiments to a man, their allies, the savage Indians, could not be more ferocious than they are: they could not murder one more helpless woman or child, or with more exquisite refinements of cruelty, torment to death one more of their English flesh and blood, than they do already. The

public money is given to purchase this alliance;—and they have their bargain.

They are continually boasting of unanimity, or calling for it. But before this unanimity can be matter either of wish or congratulation, we ought to be pretty sure, that we are engaged in a rational pursuit. Phrenzy does not become a slighter distemper on account of the number of those who may be infected with it. Delusion and weakness produce not one mischief the less, because they are universal. I declare, that I cannot discern the least advantage which could accrue to us, if we were able to persuade our colonies that they had not a single friend in Great Britain. On the contrary, if the affections and opinions of mankind be not exploded as principles of connection, I conceive it would be happy for us, if they were taught to believe, that there was even a formed American party in England, to whom they could always look for support! Happy would it be for us, if in all tempers, they might turn their eyes to the parent state; so that their very turbulence and sedition should find vent in no other place than this. I believe there is not a man (except those who prefer the interest of some paltry faction to the very being of their country) who would not wish that the Americans should from time to time carry many points, and even some of them not quite reasonable, by the aid of any denomination of men here, rather than they should be driven to seek for protection against the fury of foreign mercenaries, and the waste of savages, in the arms of France.

When any community is subordinately connected with another, the great danger of the connection is the extreme pride and self-complacency of the superiour, which in all matters of controversy will probably decide in its own favour. It is a powerful corrective to such a very rational cause of fear, if the inferiour body can be made to believe, that the party inclination or political views of several in the principal state, will induce them in some degree to counteract this blind and tyrannical partiality. There is no danger that any one acquiring consideration or power in the presiding state, should carry this leaning to the inferiour too far. The fault of human nature is not of that sort. Power in whatever hands is rarely guilty of too strict limitations on itself. But one great advantage to the support of authority attends such an amicable and protecting connection, that those who have conferred favours obtain influence; and from the foresight of future events can persuade men, who have received obligations, sometimes to return them. Thus by the mediation of those healing principles, (call them good or evil,) troublesome discussions are brought to some sort of adjustment; and every hot controversy is not a civil war.

But, if the colonies (to bring the general matter home to us) could see, that in Great Britain the mass of the people is melted into its government, and that every dispute with the ministry, must of necessity be always a quarrel with the nation; they can stand no longer in the equal and friendly relation of fellow-citizens to the subjects of this kingdom. Humble as this relation may appear to some, when it is once broken, a strong tie is dissolved. Other sort of connections will be sought. For, there are very few in the world, who will not prefer an useful ally to an insolent master.

Such discord has been the effect of the unanimity into which so many have of late been seduced or bullied, or into the appearance of which they have sunk through mere despair. They have been told that their dissent from violent measures is an encouragement to rebellion. Men of great presumption and little knowledge will hold a language which is contradicted by the whole course of history. *General* rebellions and revolts of an whole people never were *encouraged*, now or at any time. They are always *provoked*. But if this unheard-of doctrine of the encouragement of rebellion were true, if it were true that an assurance of the friendship of numbers in this country towards the colonies, could become an encouragement to them to break off all connection with it, what is the inference? Does any body seriously maintain, that, charged with my share of the public councils, I am obliged not to resist projects which I think mischievous, lest men who suffer should be encouraged to resist? The very tendency of such projects to produce rebellion is one of the chief reasons against them. Shall that reason not be given? Is it then a rule, that no man in this nation shall open his mouth in favour of the colonies, shall defend their rights, or complain of their sufferings? Or when war finally breaks out, no man shall express his desires of peace? Has this been the law of our past, or is it to be the terms of our future connection? Even looking no further than ourselves, can it be true royalty to any government, or true patriotism towards any country, to degrade their solemn councils into servile drawing-rooms, to flatter their pride and passions, rather than to enlighten their reason, and to prevent them from being cautioned against violence lest others should be encouraged to resistance? By such acquiescence great kings and mighty nations have

been undone; and if any are at this day in a perilous situation from rejecting truth, and listening to flattery, it would rather become them to reform the errours under which they suffer, than to reproach those who forewarned them of their danger.

But the rebels looked for assistance from this country. They did so in the beginning of this controversy, most certainly; and they sought it by earnest applications to government, which dignity rejected, and by a suspension of commerce, which the wealth of this nation enabled you to despise. When they found that neither prayers nor menaces had any sort of weight, but that a firm resolution was taken to reduce them to unconditional obedience by a military force, they came to the last extremity. Despairing of us, they trusted in themselves. Not strong enough themselves, they sought succour in France. In proportion as all encouragement here lessened, their distance from this country increased. The encouragement is over; the alienation is complete.

In order to produce this favourite unanimity in delusion, and to prevent all possibility of a return to our ancient happy concord, arguments for our continuance in this course, are drawn from the wretched situation itself into which we have been betrayed. It is said, that being at war with the colonies, whatever our sentiments might have been before, all ties between us are now dissolved; and all the policy we have left is to strengthen the hands of government to reduce them. On the principle of this argument, the more mischiefs we suffer from any administration, the more our trust in it is to be confirmed. Let them but once get us into a war, and then their power is safe, and an act of oblivion past for all their misconduct.

But is it really true, that government is always to be strengthened with the instruments of war, but never furnished with the means of peace? In former times ministers, I allow, have been sometimes driven by the popular voice to assert by arms the national honour against foreign powers. But the wisdom of the nation has been far more clear, when those ministers have been compelled to consult its interests by treaty. We all know that the sense of the nation obliged the court of Charles the Second to abandon the *Dutch war*; a war next to the present the most impolitic which we ever carried on. The good people of England considered Holland as a sort of dependency on this kingdom; they dreaded to drive it to the protection, or subject it to the power of France, by their own inconsiderate hostility. They paid but little respect to the court jargon of that day; nor were they inflamed by the pretended rivalship of the Dutch in trade; by the massacre at Amboyna, acted on the stage to provoke the public vengeance; nor by declamations against the ingratitude of the United Provinces for the benefits England had conferred upon them in their infant state. They were not moved from their evident interest by all these arts; nor was it enough to tell them, they were at war; that they must go through with it; and that the cause of the dispute was lost in the consequences. The people of England were then, as they are now, called upon to make government strong. They thought it a great deal better to make it wise and honest.

When I was among my constituents at the last summer assizes, I remember that men of all descriptions did then express a very strong desire for peace, and no slight hopes of attaining it from the commission sent out by my Lord Howe. And it is not a little remarkable, that in proportion as every person shewed a zeal for the court measures, he was then earnest in circulating an opinion of the extent of the supposed powers of that commission. When I told them that Lord Howe had no powers to treat, or to promise satisfaction on any point whatsoever of the controversy, I was hardly credited; so strong and general was the desire of terminating this war by the method of accommodation. As far as I could discover, this was the temper then prevalent through the kingdom. The king's forces, it must be observed, had at that time been obliged to evacuate Boston. The superiority of the former campaign rested wholly with the colonists. If such powers of treaty were to be wished, whilst success was very doubtful, how came they to be less so, since his majesty's arms have been crowned with many considerable advantages? Have these successes induced us to alter our mind, as thinking the season of victory not the time for treating with honour or advantage? Whatever changes have happened in the national character, it can scarcely be our wish, that terms of accommodation never should be proposed to our enemy, except when they must be attributed solely to our fears. It has happened, let me say unfortunately, that we read of his majesty's commission for making peace, and his troops evacuating his last town in the thirteen colonies, at the same hour, and in the same gazette. It was still more unfortunate, that no commission went to America to settle the troubles there until several months after an act had been

passed to put the colonies out of the protection of this government, and to divide their trading property, without a possibility of restitution, as spoil among the seamen of the navy. The most abject submission on the part of the colonies could not redeem them. There was no man on that whole continent, or within three thousand miles of it, qualified by law to follow allegiance with protection, or submission with pardon. A proceeding of this kind has no example in history. Independency, and independency with an enmity (which putting ourselves out of the question would be called natural and much provoked) was the inevitable consequence. How this came to pass, the nation may be one day in a humour to enquire.

All the attempts made this session to give fuller powers of peace to the commanders in America, were stifled by the fatal confidence of victory, and the wild hopes of unconditional submission. There was a moment favourable to the king's arms, when if any powers of concession had existed, on the other side of the Atlantic, even after all our errours, peace in all probability might have been restored. But calamity is unhappily the usual season of reflection; and the pride of men will not often suffer reason to have any scope until it can be no longer of service.

I have always wished, that as the dispute had its apparent origin from things done in parliament, and as the acts passed there had provoked the war, that the foundations of peace should be laid in parliament also. I have been astonished to find, that those whose zeal for the dignity of our body was so hot, as to light up the flames of civil war, should even publicly declare, that these delicate points ought to be wholly left to the crown. Poorly as I may be thought affected to the authority of parliament, I shall never admit that our constitutional rights can ever become a matter of ministerial negotiation.

I am charged with being an American.] If warm affection towards those over whom I claim any share of authority, be a crime, I am guilty of this charge. But I do assure you (and they who know me publicly and privately will bear witness to me) that if ever one man lived, more zealous than another, for the supremacy of parliament, and the rights of this imperial crown, it was myself. Many others indeed might be more knowing in the extent of the foundation of these rights. I do not pretend to be an antiquary, a lawyer, or qualified for the chair of professor in metaphysics. I never ventured to put your solid interests upon speculative grounds. My having constantly declined to do so has been attributed to my incapacity for such disquisitions; and I am inclined to believe it is partly the cause. I never shall be ashamed to confess, that where I am ignorant I am diffident. I am indeed not very solicitous to clear myself of this imputed incapacity; because men, even less conversant than I am, in this kind of subtleties, and placed in stations, to which I ought not to aspire, have by the mere force of civil discretion, often conducted the affairs of great nations with distinguished felicity and glory.

When I first came into a public trust, I found your parliament in possession of an unlimited legislative power over the colonies. I could not open the statute book, without seeing the actual exercise of it, more or less, in all cases whatsoever. This possession passed with me for a title. It does so in all human affairs. No man examines into the defects of his title to his paternal estate, or to his established government. Indeed common sense taught me, that a legislative authority, not actually limited by the express terms of its foundation, or by its own subsequent acts, cannot have its powers parcelled out by argumentative distinctions, so as to enable us to say, that here they can, and there they cannot bind. Nobody was so obliging as to produce to me any record of such distinctions, by compact or otherwise, either at the successive formation of the several colonies, or during the existence of any of them. If any gentleman were able to see, how one power could be given up, (merely on abstract reasoning,) without giving up the rest, I can only say, that they saw further than I could; nor did I ever presume to condemn any one for being clear-sighted, when I was blind. I praise their penetration and learning; and hope that their practice has been correspondent to their theory.

I had indeed very earnest wishes to keep the whole body of this authority perfect and entire as I found it, and to keep it so, not for our advantage solely; but principally for the sake of those, on whose account all just authority exists; I mean the people to be governed. For I thought I saw, that many cases might well happen, in which the exercise of every power comprehended in the broadest idea of legislature, might become in its time and circumstances, not a little expedient for the peace and union of the colonies among themselves, as well as for their perfect harmony with Great Britain. Thinking so, (perhaps erroneously,) but being honestly of that opinion, I was at the same time very sure, that the authority of which I was so jealous, could

not under the actual circumstances of our plantations be at all preserved in any of its members, but by the greatest reserve in its application; particularly in those delicate points, in which the feelings of mankind are the most irritable. They who thought otherwise, have found a few more difficulties in their work, than (I hope) they were thoroughly aware of, when they undertook the present business. I must beg leave to observe, that it is not only the invidious branch of taxation that will be resisted, but that no other given part of legislative rights can be exercised, without regard to the general opinion of those who are to be governed. That general opinion is the vehicle, and organ of legislative omnipotence. Without this, it may be a theory to entertain the mind, but it is nothing in the direction of affairs. The completeness of the legislative authority of parliament *over this kingdom* is not questioned; and yet many things indubitably included in the abstract idea of that power, and which carry no absolute injustice in themselves, yet being contrary to the opinions and feelings of the people, can as little be exercised, as if parliament in that case had been possessed of no right at all. I see no abstract reason, which can be given, why the same power which made and repealed the high commission court and the star-chamber, might not revive them again; and these courts, warned by their former fate, might possibly exercise their powers with some degree of justice. But the madness would be as unquestionable, as the competence of that parliament, which should attempt such things. If any thing can be supposed out of the power of human legislature, it is religion; I admit, however, that the established religion of this country has been three or four times altered by act of parliament; and therefore that a statute binds even in that case. But we may very safely affirm, that notwithstanding this apparent omnipotence, it would be now found as impossible for king and parliament to alter the established religion of this country, as it was to King James alone, when he attempted to make such an alteration without a parliament. In effect, to follow, not to force the public inclination; to give a direction, a form, a technical dress, and a specific sanction, to the general sense of the community, is the true end of legislature.

It is so with regard to the exercise of all the powers, which our constitution knows in any of its parts, and indeed to the substantial existence of any of the parts themselves. The king's negative to bills is one of the most indisputed of the royal prerogatives; and it extends to all cases whatsoever. I am far from certain, that if several laws, which I know, had fallen under the stroke of that sceptre, that the public would have had a very heavy loss. But it is not the *propriety* of the exercise which is in question. The exercise itself is wisely foreborne. Its repose may be the preservation of its existence; and its existence may be the means of saving the constitution itself, on an occasion worthy of bringing it forth. As the disputants, whose accurate and logical reasonings have brought us into our present condition, think it absurd, that powers or members of any constitution should exist, rarely or ever to be exercised, I hope I shall be excused in mentioning another instance, that is material. We know, that the convocation of the clergy had formerly been called, and sat with nearly as much regularity to business as parliament itself. It is now called for form only. It sits for the purpose of making some polite ecclesiastical compliments to the king; and when that grace is said, retires and is heard of no more. It is however *a part of the constitution*, and may be called out into act and energy, whenever there is occasion; and whenever those, who conjure up that spirit, will choose to abide the consequences. It is wise to permit its legal existence; it is much wiser to continue it a legal existence only. So truly has prudence (constituted as the god of this lower world) the entire dominion over every exercise of power, committed into its hands; and yet I have lived to see prudence and conformity to circumstances, wholly set at naught in our late controversies, and treated as if they were the most contemptible and irrational of all things. I have heard it a hundred times very gravely alleged, that in order to keep power in wind, it was necessary, by preference, to exert it in those very points in which it was most likely to be resisted, and the least likely to be productive of any advantage.

These were the considerations, gentlemen, which led me early to think, that, in the comprehensive dominion which the Divine Providence had put into our hands, instead of troubling our understandings with speculations concerning the unity of empire, and the identity or distinction of legislative powers, and inflaming our passions with the heat and pride of controversy, it was our duty, in all soberness, to conform our government to the character and circumstances of the several people who compose this mighty and strangely diversified mass. I never was wild enough to

conceive, that one method would serve for the whole; that the natives of Hindostan and those of Virginia could be ordered in the same manner; or that the Cutchery court and the grand jury of Salem could be regulated on a similar plan. I was persuaded that government was a practical thing, made for the happiness of mankind, and not to furnish out a spectacle of uniformity, to gratify the schemes of visionary politicians. Our business was to rule, not to wrangle; and it would have been a poor compensation that we had triumphed in a dispute, whilst we lost an empire.

If there be one fact in the world perfectly clear, it is this; "That the disposition of the people of America is wholly averse to any other than a free government;" and this is indication enough to any honest statesman, how he ought to adapt whatever power he finds in his hands to their case. If any ask me what a free government is, I answer that, for any practical purpose, it is what the people think so; and that they, and not I, are the natural, lawful, and competent judges of this matter. If they practically allow me a greater degree of authority over them than is consistent with any correct ideas of perfect freedom, I ought to thank them for so great a trust and not to endeavour to prove from thence, that they have reasoned amiss, and that having gone so far, by analogy, they must hereafter have no enjoyment but by my pleasure.

If we had seen this done by any others, we should have concluded them far gone in madness. It is melancholy as well as ridiculous, to observe the kind of reasoning with which the public has been amused, in order to divert our minds from the common sense of our American policy. There are people, who have split and anatomised the doctrine of free government, as if it were an abstract question concerning metaphysical liberty and necessity; and not a matter of moral prudence and natural feeling. They have disputed, whether liberty be a positive or a negative idea; whether it does not consist in being governed by laws; without considering what are the laws, or who are the makers; whether man has any rights by nature; and whether all the property he enjoys, be not the alms of his government, and his life itself their favour and indulgence. Others corrupting religion, as these have perverted philosophy, contend, that Christians are redeemed into captivity; and the blood of the Saviour of mankind has been shed to make them the slaves of a few proud and insolent sinners. These shocking extremes, provoking to extremes of another kind, speculations are let loose as destructive to all authority, as the former are to all freedom; and every government is called tyranny and usurpation which is not formed on their fancies. In this manner the stirrers-up of this contention, not satisfied with distracting our dependencies and filling them with blood and slaughter, are corrupting our understandings: they are endeavouring to tear up, along with practical liberty, all the foundations of human society, all equity and justice, religion and order.

Civil freedom, gentlemen, is not, as many have endeavoured to persuade you, a thing that lies hid in the depth of abstruse science. It is a blessing and a benefit, not an abstract speculation; and all the just reasoning that can be upon it, is of so coarse a texture, as perfectly to suit the ordinary capacities of those who are to enjoy, and of those who are to defend it. Far from any resemblance to those propositions in geometry and metaphysics, which admit no medium, but must be true or false in all their latitude; social and civil freedom, like all other things in common life, are variously mixed and modified, enjoyed in very different degrees, and shaped into an infinite diversity of forms, according to the temper and circumstances of every community. The *extreme* of liberty (which is its abstract perfection, but its real fault) obtains no where, nor ought to obtain any where. Because extremes, as we all know, in every point which relates either to our duties or satisfactions in life, are destructive both to virtue and enjoyment. Liberty too must be limited in order to be possessed. The degree of restraint it is impossible in any case to settle precisely. But it ought to be the constant aim of every wise public counsel, to find out by cautious experiments, and rational, cool endeavours, with how little, not how much of this restraint, the community can subsist. For liberty is a good to be improved, and not an evil to be lessened. It is not only a private blessing of the first order, but the vital spring and energy of the state itself, which has just so much life and vigour as there is liberty in it. But whether liberty be advantageous or not, (for I know it is a fashion to decry the very principle,) none will dispute that peace is a blessing; and peace must in the course of human affairs be frequently bought by some indulgence and toleration at least to liberty. For as the sabbath (though of divine institution) was made for man, not man for the sabbath, government, which can claim no higher origin or authority, in its exercise at least, ought to conform to the exigencies of the time, and the temper and

character of the people, with whom it is concerned; and not always to attempt violently to bend the people to their theories of subjection. The bulk of mankind on their part are not excessively curious concerning any theories, whilst they are really happy; and one sure symptom of an ill-conducted state, is the propensity of the people to resort to them.

But when subjects, by a long course of such ill conduct, are once thoroughly inflamed, and the state itself violently distempered, the people must have some satisfaction to their feelings more solid than a sophistical speculation on law and government. Such was our situation; and such a satisfaction was necessary to prevent recourse to arms; it was necessary towards laying them down; it will be necessary to prevent the taking them up again and again. Of what nature this satisfaction ought to be, I wish it had been the disposition of parliament seriously to consider. It was certainly a deliberation that called for the exertion of all their wisdom.

I am, and ever have been deeply sensible, of the difficulty of reconciling the strong presiding power, that is so useful towards the conservation of a vast, disconnected, infinitely diversified empire, with that liberty and safety of the provinces, which they must enjoy, (in opinion and practice at least,) or they will not be provinces at all. I know, and have long felt the difficulty of reconciling the unwieldly haughtiness of a great ruling nation, habituated to command, pampered by enormous wealth, and confident from a long course of prosperity and victory, to the high spirit of free dependencies, animated with the first glow and activity of juvenile heat, and assuming to themselves as their birthright, some part of that very pride which oppresses them. They who perceive no difficulty in reconciling these tempers, (which however to make peace must some way or other be reconciled,) are much above my capacity, or much below the magnitude of the business. Of one thing I am perfectly clear, that it is not by deciding the suit, but by compromising the difference, that peace can be restored or kept. They who would put an end to such quarrels, by declaring roundly in favour of the whole demands of either party, have mistaken, in my humble opinion, the office of a mediator.

The war is now of full two years standing; the controversy of many more. In different periods of the dispute, different methods of reconciliation were to be pursued. I mean to trouble you with a short state of things at the most important of these periods, in order to give you a more distinct idea of our policy with regard to this most delicate of all objects. The colonies were from the beginning subject to the legislature of Great Britain, on principles which they never examined; and we permitted to them many local privileges, without asking how they agreed with that legislative authority. Modes of administration were formed in an insensible and very unsystematic manner. But they gradually adapted themselves to the varying condition of things.—What was first a single kingdom stretched into an empire; and an imperial superintendency of some kind or other became necessary. Parliament, from a mere representative of the people, and a guardian of popular privileges for its own immediate constituents, grew into a mighty sovereignty. Instead of being a controul on the crown on its own behalf, it communicated a sort of strength to the royal authority; which was wanted for the conservation of a new object, but which could not be safely trusted to the crown alone. On the other hand, the colonies advancing by equal steps, and governed by the same necessity, had formed within themselves, either by royal instruction, or royal charter, assemblies so exceedingly resembling a parliament, in all their forms, functions, and powers, that it was impossible they should not imbibe some opinion of a similar authority.

At the first designation of these assemblies, they were probably not intended for any thing more (nor perhaps did they think themselves much higher) than the municipal corporations within this Island, to which some at present love to compare them. But nothing in progression can rest on its original plan. We may as well think of rocking a grown man in the cradle of an infant. Therefore as the colonies prospered and increased to a numerous and mighty people, spreading over a very great tract of the globe; it was natural that they should attribute to assemblies so respectable in their formal constitution, some part of the dignity of the great nations which they represented. No longer tied to by-laws, these assemblies made acts of all sorts and in all cases whatsoever. They levied money, not for parochial purposes, but upon regular grants to the crown, following all the rules and principles of a parliament to which they approached every day more and more nearly. Those who think themselves wiser than Providence and stronger than the course of nature, may complain of all this variation, on the one side or the other, as their several humours and prejudices may lead them. But things could not

be otherwise; and English colonies must be had on these terms, or not at all. In the mean time neither party felt any inconvenience from this double legislature, to which they had been formed by imperceptible habits, and old custom, the great support of all the governments in the world. Though these two legislatures were sometimes found perhaps performing the very same functions, they did not very grossly or systematically clash. In all likelihood this arose from mere neglect; possibly from the natural operation of things, which, left to themselves, generally fall into their proper order. But whatever was the cause, it is certain that a regular revenue by the authority of parliament for the support of civil and military establishments, seems not to have been thought of until the colonies were too proud to submit, too strong to be forced, too enlightened not to see all the consequences which must arise from such a system.

If ever this scheme of taxation was to be pushed against the inclinations of the people, it was evident that discussions must arise, which would let loose all the elements that composed this double constitution; would shew how much each of their members had departed from its original principles; and would discover contradictions in each legislature, as well to its own first principles, as to its relation to the other, very difficult if not absolutely impossible to be reconciled.

Therefore, at the first fatal opening of this contest, the wisest course seemed to be to put an end as soon as possible to the immediate causes of the dispute; and to quiet a discussion, not easily settled upon clear principles, and arising from claims which pride would permit neither party to abandon, by resorting as nearly as possible to the old successful course. A mere repeal of the obnoxious tax, with a declaration of the legislative authority of this kingdom, was then fully sufficient to procure peace to *both sides*. Man is a creature of habit, and the first breach being of very short continuance, the colonies fell back exactly into their ancient state. The congress had used an expression with regard to this pacification, which appears to me truly significant. After the repeal of the Stamp Act, "the colonies fell," says this assembly, "into their ancient state of *unsuspecting confidence in the mother country*." This unsuspecting confidence is the true centre of gravity among mankind, about which all the parts are at rest. It is this *unsuspecting confidence*, that removes all difficulties, and reconciles all the contradictions which occur in the complexity of all ancient puzzled political establishments. Happy are the rulers which have the secret of preserving it!

The whole empire had reason to remember with eternal gratitude, the wisdom and temper of that man and his excellent associates, who, to recover this confidence, formed a plan of pacification in 1766. That plan, being built upon the nature of man, and the circumstances and habits of the two countries, and not on any visionary speculations, perfectly answered its end, as long as it was thought proper to adhere to it. Without giving a rude shock to the dignity (well or ill understood) of this parliament, they gave perfect content to our dependencies. Had it not been for the mediatorial spirit and talents of that great man, between such clashing pretensions and passions, we should then have rushed headlong (I know what I say) into the calamities of that civil war, in which, by departing from this system, we are at length involved; and we should have been precipitated into that war, at a time, when circumstances both at home and abroad were far, very far, more unfavourable unto us than they were at the breaking out of the present troubles.

I had the happiness of giving my first votes in parliament for that pacification. I was one of those almost unanimous members, who, in the necessary concessions of parliament, would as much as possible have preserved its authority, and respected its honour. I could not at once tear from my heart prejudices which were dear to me, and which bore a resemblance to virtue. I had then, and I have still my partialities. What parliament gave up, I wished to be given as of grace, and favour, and affection, and not as a restitution of stolen goods. High dignity relented as it was soothed; and a benignity from old acknowledged greatness had its full effect on our dependencies. Our unlimited declaration of legislative authority produced not a single murmur. If this undefined power has become odious since that time, and full of horrour to the colonies, it is because the *unsuspicious confidence* is lost, and the parental affection, in the bosom of whose boundless authority they reposed their privileges, is become estranged and hostile.

It will be asked, if such was then my opinion of the mode of pacification, how I came to be the very person who moved, not only for a repeal of all the late coercive statutes, but for mutilating by a positive law, the entireness of the legislative power of parliament, and cutting off from it the whole right of taxation? I answer, because a different state of things requires a

different conduct. When the dispute had gone to those last extremities, (which no man laboured more to prevent than I did,) the concessions which had satisfied in the beginning, could satisfy no longer; because the violation of tacit faith required explicit security. The same cause which has introduced all formal compacts and covenants among men made it necessary. I mean habits of soreness, jealousy, and distrust. I parted with it, as with a limb; but as a limb to save the body; and I would have parted with more, if more had been necessary; any thing rather than a fruitless, hopeless, unnatural civil war. This mode of yielding, would, it is said, give way to independency without a war. I am persuaded from the nature of things, and from every information, that it would have had a directly contrary effect. But if it had this effect, I confess that I should prefer independency without war, to independency with it; and I have so much trust in the inclinations and prejudices of mankind, and so little in any thing else, that I should expect ten times more benefit to this kingdom from the affection of America, though under a separate establishment, than from her perfect submission to the crown and parliament, accompanied with her terrour, disgust, and abhorrence. Bodies tied together by so unnatural a bond of union as mutual hatred, are only connected to their ruin.

One hundred and ten respectable members of parliament voted for that concession. Many not present when the motion was made, were of the sentiments of those who voted. I knew it would then have made peace. I am not without hopes that it would do so at present if it were adopted. No benefit, no revenue could be lost by it; something might possibly be gained by its consequences. For be fully assured, that, of all the phantoms that ever deluded the fond hopes of a credulous world, a parliamentary revenue in the colonies is the most perfectly chimerical. Your breaking them to any subjection, far from relieving your burthens, (the pretext for this war,) will never pay that military force which will be kept up to the destruction of their liberties and yours. I risk nothing in this prophecy.

Gentlemen, you have my opinions on the present state of public affairs. Mean as they may be in themselves, your partiality has made them of some importance. Without troubling myself to enquire whether I am under a formal obligation to it, I have a pleasure in accounting for my conduct to my constituents. I feel warmly on this subject, and I express myself as I feel. If I presume to blame any public proceeding, I cannot be supposed to be personal. Would to God I could be suspected of it. My fault might be greater, but the public calamity would be less extensive. If my conduct has not been able to make any impression on the warm part of that ancient and powerful party, with whose support I was not honoured at my election; on my side, my respect, regard, and duty to them is not at all lessened. I owe the gentlemen who compose it my most humble service in every thing. I hope that whenever any of them were pleased to command me, that they found me perfectly equal in my obedience. But flattery and friendship are very different things; and to mislead is not to serve them. I cannot purchase the favour of any man by concealing from him what I think his ruin. By the favour of my fellow-citizens, I am the representative of an honest, well-ordered, virtuous city; of a people, who preserve more of the original English simplicity, and purity of manners, than perhaps any other. You possess among you several men and magistrates of large and cultivated understandings; fit for any employment in any sphere. I do, to the best of my power, act so as to make myself worthy of so honourable a choice. If I were ready, on any call of my own vanity or interest, or to answer any election purpose, to forsake principles, (whatever they are) which I had formed at a mature age, on full reflection, and which had been confirmed by long experience, I should forfeit the only thing which makes you pardon so many errours and imperfections in me. Not that I think it fit for any one to rely too much on his own understanding; or to be filled with a presumption, not becoming a Christian man, in his own personal stability and rectitude.

I hope I am far from that vain confidence, which almost always fails in trial. I know my weakness in all respects, as much at least as any enemy I have; and I attempt to take security against it. The only method which has ever been found effectual to preserve any man against the corruption of nature and example, is an habit of life and communication of councils with the most virtuous and public-spirited men of the age you live in. Such a society cannot be kept without advantage or deserted without shame. For this rule of conduct I may be called in reproach a *party man;* but I am little affected with such aspersions. In the way which they call party, I worship the constitution of your fathers; and I shall never blush for my political company. All reverence to honour, all idea of what it is, will be lost out of the world, before it can be imputed as a

fault to any man, that he has been closely connected with those incomparable persons, living and dead, with whom for eleven years I have constantly thought and acted. If I have wandered out of the paths of rectitude, into those of interested factions, it was in company with the Saviles, the Dowdeswells, the Wentworths, the Bentincks; with the Lenoxes, the Manchesters, the Keppels, the Saunders's; with the temperate, permanent, hereditary virtue of the whole house of Cavendish; names, among which, some have extended your fame and empire in arms, and all have fought the battle of your liberties in fields not less glorious.—These and many more like these, grafting public principles on private honour, have redeemed the present age, and would have adorned the most splendid period in your history. Where could any man, conscious of his own inability to act alone, and willing to act as he ought to do, have arranged himself better? If any one thinks this kind of society to be taken up as the best method of gratifying low personal pride, or ambitious interest, he is mistaken; and knows nothing of the world.

Preferring this connection; I do not mean to detract in the slightest degree from others. There are some of those, whom I admire at something of a greater distance, with whom I had the happiness also perfectly to agree, in almost all the particulars, in which I have differed with some successive administrations, and they are such, as it never can be reputable to any government to reckon among its enemies. I hope there are none of you, corrupted with the doctrine taught by wicked men for the worst purposes, and received by the malignant credulity of envy and ignorance, which is, that the men who act upon the public stage are all alike; all equally corrupt; all influenced by no other views than the sordid lure of salary and pension. The thing, I know by experience to be false. Never expecting to find perfection in men, and not looking for divine attributes in created beings, in my commerce with my cotemporaries, I have found much human virtue. I have seen not a little public spirit; a real subordination of interest to duty; and a decent and regulated sensibility to honest fame and reputation. The age unquestionably produces (whether in a greater or less number than former times, I know not) daring profligates and insidious hypocrites. What then? Am I not to avail myself of whatever good is to be found in the world, because of the mixture of evil that will always be in it? The smallness of the quantity in currency only heightens the value. They, who raise suspicions on the good on account of the behaviour of ill men, are of the party of the latter. The common cant is no justification for taking this party. I have been deceived, say they, by *Titius* and *Mævius*; I have been the dupe of this pretender or of that mountebank; and I can trust appearances no longer. But my credulity and want of discernment cannot, as I conceive, amount to a fair presumption against any man's integrity. A conscientious person would rather doubt his own judgment, than condemn his species. He would say, I have observed without attention, or judged upon erroneous maxims; I trusted to profession, when I ought to have attended to conduct. Such a man will grow wise, not malignant, by his acquaintance with the world. But he that accuses all mankind of corruption ought to remember that he is sure to convict only one. In truth I should much rather admit those whom at any time I have disrelished the most, to be patterns of perfection, than seek a consolation to my own unworthiness, in a general communion of depravity with all about me.

That this ill-natured doctrine should be preached by the missionaries of a court I do not wonder. It answers their purpose. But that it should be heard among those who pretend to be strong assertors of liberty, is not only surprising, but hardly natural. This moral levelling is a *servile principle*. It leads to practical passive obedience far better, than all the doctrines, which the pliant accommodation of theology to power has ever produced. It cuts up by the roots, not only all idea of forcible resistance, but even of civil opposition. It disposes men to an abject submission, not by opinion, which may be shaken by argument or altered by passion, but by the strong ties of public and private interest. For if all men who act in a public situation are equally selfish, corrupt, and venal, what reason can be given for desiring any sort of change, which, besides the evils which must attend all changes, can be productive of no possible advantage? The active men in the state are true samples of the mass. If they are universally depraved, the commonwealth itself is not sound. We may amuse ourselves with talking as much as we please of the virtue of middle or humble life; that is, we may place our confidence in the virtue of those who have never been tried. But if the persons who are continually emerging out of that sphere, be no better than those whom birth has placed above it, what hopes are there in the remainder of the body, which is to furnish the perpetual succession of the state? All who have ever written on government, are unanimous, that among a people

generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist. And indeed how is it possible? when those who are to make the laws, to guard, to enforce, or to obey them, are by a tacit confederacy of manners, indisposed to the spirit of all generous and noble institutions.

I am aware that the age is not what we all wish. But I am sure, that the only means of checking its precipitate degeneracy, is heartily to concur with whatever is the best in our time; and to have some more correct standard of judging what that best is, than the transient and uncertain favour of a court. If once we are able to find, and can prevail on ourselves to strengthen an union of such men, whatever accidentally becomes indisposed to ill-exercised power, even by the ordinary operation of human passions, must join with that society, and cannot long be joined, without in some degree assimilating to it. Virtue will catch as well as vice by contact; and the public stock of honest manly principle will daily accumulate. We are not too nicely to scrutinize motives as long as action is irreproachable. It is enough, (and for a worthy man perhaps too much,) to deal out its infamy to convicted guilt and declared apostacy.

This, gentlemen, has been from the beginning the rule of my conduct; and I mean to continue it, as long as such a body as I have described, can by any possibility be kept together; for I should think it the most dreadful of all offences, not only towards the present generation but to all the future, if I were to do any thing which could make the minutest breach in this great conservatory of free principles. Those who perhaps have the same intentions, but are separated by some little political animosities, will I hope discern at last, how little conducive it is to any rational purpose, to lower its reputation. For my part, gentlemen, from much experience, from no little thinking, and from comparing a great variety of things, I am thoroughly persuaded, that the last hopes of preserving the spirit of the English constitution, or of re-uniting the dissipated members of the English race upon a common plan of tranquillity and liberty, does entirely depend on their firm and lasting union; and above all on their keeping themselves from that despair, which is so very apt to fall on those, whom a violence of character and a mixture of ambitious views, do not support through a long, painful, and unsuccessful struggle.

There never, gentlemen, was a period in which the steadfastness of some men has been put to so sore a trial. It is not very difficult for well-formed minds to abandon their interest; but the separation of fame and virtue is an harsh divorce. Liberty is in danger of being made unpopular to Englishmen. Contending for an imaginary power, we begin to acquire the spirit of domination, and to lose the relish of honest equality. The principles of our forefathers become suspected to us, because we see them animating the present opposition of our children. The faults which grow out of the luxuriance of freedom, appear much more shocking to us, than the base vices which are generated from the rankness of servitude. Accordingly the least resistance to power appears more inexcusable in our eyes than the greatest abuses of authority. All dread of a standing military force is looked upon as a superstitious panic. All shame of calling in foreigners and savages in a civil contest is worn off. We grow indifferent to the consequences inevitable to ourselves from the plan of ruling half the empire by a mercenary sword. We are taught to believe that a desire of domineering over our countrymen is love to our country; and those who hate civil war abet rebellion, and that the amiable and conciliatory virtues of lenity, moderation, and tenderness to the privileges of those who depend on this kingdom are a sort of treason to the state.

It is impossible that we should remain long in a situation, which breeds such notions and dispositions, without some great alteration in the national character. Those ingenuous and feeling minds who are so fortified against all other things, and so unarmed to whatever approaches in the shape of disgrace, finding these principles, which they considered as sure means of honour, to be grown into disrepute, will retire disheartened and disgusted. Those of a more robust make, the bold, able, ambitious men, who pay some of their court to power through the people, and substitute the voice of transient opinion in the place of true glory, will give into the general mode; and those superiour understandings which ought to correct vulgar prejudice, will confirm and aggravate its errours. Many things have been long operating towards a gradual change in our principles. But this American war has done more in a very few years than all the other causes could have effected in a century. It is therefore not on its own separate account, but because of its attendant circumstances, that I consider its continuance, or its ending in any way but that of an honourable and liberal accommodation, as the greatest evils which can befall us. For that reason I have troubled you with this long letter. For that

reason I intreat you again and again, neither to be persuaded, shamed, or frighted out of the principles that have hitherto led so many of you to abhor the war, its cause, and its consequences. Let us not be among the first who renounce the maxims of our forefathers.

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient,
And faithful humble servant,
EDMUND BURKE.

Beaconsfield, April 3, 1777.

P. S. You may communicate this letter in any manner you think proper to my constituents.

TWO LETTERS

FROM MR. BURKE, TO GENTLEMEN IN THE CITY OF BRISTOL, ON THE BILLS DEPENDING IN PARLIAMENT RELATIVE TO THE TRADE OF IRELAND. 1778.

TO SAMUEL SPAN, Esq.

MASTER OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANTS ADVENTURERS OF BRISTOL.

SIR,

I AM honoured with your letter of the 13th, in answer to mine, which accompanied the resolutions of the house relative to the trade of Ireland.

You will be so good as to present my best respects to the society, and to assure them, that it was altogether unnecessary to remind me of the interest of the constituents. I have never regarded any thing else, since I had a seat in parliament. Having frequently and maturely considered that interest, and stated it to myself in almost every point of view, I am persuaded, that, under the present circumstances, I cannot more effectually pursue it, than by giving all the support in my power to the propositions which I lately transmitted to the hall.

The fault I find in the scheme is,—that it falls extremely short of that liberality in the commercial system, which, I trust, will one day be adopted. If I had not considered the present resolutions, merely as preparatory to better things, and as a means of shewing experimentally, that justice to others is not always folly to ourselves, I should have contented myself with receiving them in a cold and silent acquiescence. Separately considered, they are matters of no very great importance. But they aim, however imperfectly, at a right principle. I submit to the restraint to appease prejudice: I accept the enlargement, so far as it goes, as the result of reason and of sound policy.

We cannot be insensible of the calamities which have been brought upon this nation by an obstinate adherence to narrow and restrictive plans of government. I confess, I cannot prevail on myself to take them up, precisely at a time, when the most decisive experience has taught the rest of the world to lay them down. The propositions in question did not originate from me, or from my particular friends. But when things are so right in themselves, I hold it my duty, not to enquire from what hands they come. I opposed the American measures upon the very same principle on which I support those that relate to Ireland. I was convinced, that the evils which have arisen from the adoption of the former, would be infinitely aggravated by the rejection of the latter.

Perhaps gentlemen are not yet fully aware of the situation of their country, and what its exigencies absolutely require. I find that we are still disposed to talk at our ease, and as if all things were to be regulated by our good pleasure. I should consider it as a fatal symptom, if, in our present distressed and adverse circumstances, we should persist in the errours which are natural only to prosperity. One cannot indeed sufficiently lament the continuance of that spirit of delusion, by which, for a long time past, we have thought fit to measure our necessities by our inclinations. Moderation, prudence, and equity, are far more suitable to our condition, than loftiness, and confidence, and rigour. We are threatened by enemies of no small magnitude, whom, if we think fit, we may despise, as we have despised others; but they are enemies who can only cease to be truly formidable, by our entertaining a due respect for their power. Our danger

will not be lessened by our shutting our eyes to it; nor will our force abroad be increased by rendering ourselves feeble, and divided at home.

There is a dreadful schism in the British nation. Since we are not able to re-unite the empire, it is our business to give all possible vigour and soundness to those parts of it which are still content to be governed by our councils. Sir, it is proper to inform you, that our measures *must be healing*. Such a degree of strength must be communicated to all the members of the state, as may enable them to defend themselves, and to co-operate in the defence of the whole. Their temper too must be managed, and their good affections cultivated. They may then be disposed to bear the load with cheerfulness, as a contribution towards what may be called with truth and propriety, and not by an empty form of words, a *common cause*. Too little dependence cannot be had, at this time of day, on names and prejudices. The eyes of mankind are opened; and communities must be held together by an evident and solid interest. God forbid, that our conduct should demonstrate to the world, that Great Britain can, in no instance whatsoever, be brought to a sense of rational and equitable policy, but by coercion and force of arms!

I wish you to recollect, with what powers of concession, relatively to commerce, as well as to legislation, his majesty's commissioners to the united colonies have sailed from England within this week. Whether these powers are sufficient for their purposes, it is not now my business to examine. But we all know, that our resolutions in favour of Ireland are trifling and insignificant, when compared with the concessions to the Americans. At such a juncture, I would implore every man, who retains the least spark of regard to the yet remaining honour and security of this country, not to compel others to an imitation of their conduct; or by passion and violence, to force them to seek, in the territories of the separation, that freedom, and those advantages, which they are not to look for whilst they remain under the wings of their ancient government.

After all, what are the matters we dispute with so much warmth? Do we in these resolutions *bestow* any thing upon Ireland? Not a shilling. We only consent to *leave* to them, in two or three instances, the use of the natural faculties which God has given to them, and to all mankind. Is Ireland united to the crown of Great Britain for no other purpose, than that we should counteract the bounty of Providence in her favour? And in proportion as that bounty has been liberal, that we are to regard it as an evil, which is to be met with in every sort of corrective? To say that Ireland interferes with us, and therefore must be checked, is, in my opinion, a very mistaken, and a very dangerous principle. I must beg leave to repeat, what I took the liberty of suggesting to you in my last letter, that Ireland is a country, in the same climate, and of the same natural qualities and productions with this; and has consequently no other means of growing wealthy in herself, or, in other words, of being useful to us, but by doing the very same things which we do, for the same purposes. I hope that in Great Britain we shall always pursue, without exception, *every* means of prosperity; and of course, that Ireland *will* interfere with us in something or other; for either, in order to *limit* her, we *must restrain* ourselves, or we must fall into that shocking conclusion, that we are to keep our yet remaining dependency, under a general and indiscriminate restraint, for the mere purpose of oppression. Indeed, Sir, England and Ireland may flourish together. The world is large enough for us both. Let it be our care not to make ourselves too little for it.

I know it is said, that the people of Ireland do not pay the same taxes, and therefore ought not in equity to enjoy the same benefits with this. I had hopes, that the unhappy phantom of a compulsory *equal taxation* had haunted us long enough. I do assure you, that until it is entirely banished from our imaginations, (where alone it has, or can have any existence,) we shall never cease to do ourselves the most substantial injuries. To that argument of equal taxation, I can only say,—that Ireland pays as many taxes as those who are the best judges of her powers, are of opinion she can bear. To bear more, she must have more ability; and in the order of nature, the advantage must *precede* the charge. This disposition of things, being the law of God, neither you nor I *can* alter it. So that if you will have more help from Ireland, you must *previously* supply her with more means. I believe it will be found, that if men are suffered freely to cultivate their natural advantages, a virtual equality of contribution will come in its own time, and will flow by an easy descent through its own proper and natural channels. An attempt to disturb that course, and to force nature, will only bring on universal discontent, distress and confusion.

You tell me, Sir, that you prefer an union with Ireland to the little regulations which are proposed in parliament. This union is a

great question of state, to which, when it comes properly before me in my parliamentary capacity, I shall give an honest and unprejudiced consideration. However, it is a settled rule with me, to make the most of my *actual situation*; and not to refuse to do a proper thing, because there is something else more proper, which I am not able to do. This union is a business of difficulty; and on the principles of your letter, a business impracticable. Until it can be matured into a feasible and desirable scheme, I wish to have as close an union of interest and affection with Ireland, as I can have; and that, I am sure, is a far better thing than any nominal union of goverment.

France, and indeed most extensive empires, which by various designs and fortunes have grown into one great mass, contain many provinces that are very different from each other in privileges and modes of government; and they raise their supplies in different ways; in different proportions; and under different authorities; yet none of them are for this reason curtailed of their natural rights; but they carry on trade and manufactures with perfect equality. In some way or other the true balance is found; and all of them are properly poised and harmonized. How much have you lost by the participation of Scotland in all your commerce? The external trade of England has more than doubled since that period; and I believe your internal (which is the most advantageous) has been augmented at least fourfold. Such virtue there is in liberality of sentiment, that you have grown richer even by the partnership of poverty.

If you think, that this participation was a loss, commercially considered, but that it has been compensated by the share which Scotland has taken in defraying the public charge—I believe you have not very carefully looked at the public accounts. Ireland, Sir, pays a great deal more than Scotland; and is perhaps as much, and as effectually united to England as Scotland is. But if Scotland, instead of paying little, had paid nothing at all, we should be gainers, not losers by acquiring the hearty co-operation of an active intelligent people, towards the increase of the common stock; instead of our being employed in watching and counteracting them, and their being employed in watching and counteracting us, with the peevish and churlish jealousy of rivals and enemies on both sides.

I am sure, Sir, that the commercial experience of the merchants of Bristol, will soon disabuse them of the prejudice, that they can trade no longer, if countries more highly taxed are permitted to deal in the same commodities at the same markets. You know, that in fact, you trade very largely where you are met by the goods of all nations. You even pay high duties, on the import of your goods, and afterwards undersell nations less taxed, at their own markets; and where goods of the same kind are not charged at all. If it were otherwise, you could trade very little. You know, that the price of all sorts of manufacture is not a great deal enhanced (except to the domestic consumer) by any taxes paid in this country. This I might very easily prove.

The same consideration will relieve you from the apprehension you express, with relation to sugars, and the difference of the duties paid here and in Ireland. Those duties affect the interiour consumer only; and for obvious reasons, relative to the interest of revenue itself, they must be proportioned to his ability of payment; but in all cases in which sugar can be an *object of commerce*, and therefore (in this view) of rivalship, you are sensible, that you are at least on a par with Ireland. As to your apprehensions concerning the more advantageous situation of Ireland, for some branches of commerce, (for it is so but for some) I trust you will not find them more serious. Milford Haven, which is at your door, may serve to shew you, that the mere advantage of ports is not the thing which shifts the seat of commerce from one part of the world to the other. If I thought you inclined to take up this matter on local considerations, I should state to you, that I do not know any part of the kingdom so well situated for an advantageous commerce with Ireland as Bristol; and that none would be so likely to profit of its prosperity as our city. But your profit and theirs must concur. Beggary and bankruptcy are not the circumstances which invite to an intercourse with that or with any country; and I believe it will be found invariably true, that the superfluities of a rich nation furnish a better object of trade than the necessities of a poor one. It is the interest of the commercial world that wealth should be found every where.

The true ground of fear, in my opinion, is this; that Ireland, from the vitious system of its internal polity, will be a long time before it can derive any benefit from the liberty now granted, or from any thing else. But as I do not vote advantages, in hopes that they may not be enjoyed, I will not lay any stress upon this consideration. I rather wish, that the parliament of Ireland may, in its own wisdom, remove these impediments, and put their country in a condition to avail itself of its

natural advantages. If they do not, the fault is with them, and not with us.

I have written this long letter, in order to give all possible satisfaction to my constituents with regard to the part I have taken in this affair. It gave me inexpressible concern to find, that my conduct had been a cause of uneasiness to any of them. Next to my honour and conscience, I have nothing so near and dear to me as their approbation. However, I had much rather run the risk of displeasing than of injuring them;—if I am driven to make such an option. You obligingly lament, that you are not to have me for your advocate; but if I had been capable of acting as an advocate in opposition to a plan so perfectly consonant to my known principles, and to the opinions I had publicly declared on an hundred occasions, I should only disgrace myself, without supporting with the smallest degree of credit or effect, the cause you wished me to undertake. I should have lost the only thing which can make such abilities as mine of any use to the world now or hereafter; I mean that authority which is derived from an opinion, that a member speaks the language of truth and sincerity; and that he is not ready to take up or lay down a great political system for the convenience of the hour; that he is in parliament to support his opinion of the public good, and does not form his opinion in order to get into parliament, or to continue in it. It is in a great measure for your sake, that I wish to preserve this character. Without it, I am sure, I should be ill able to discharge, by any service, the smallest part of that debt of gratitude and affection which I owe you for the great and honourable trust you have reposed in me. I am, with the highest regard and esteem,

Sir, your most obedient,
And humble servant,
E. B.

Beaconsfield, 23d *April*, 1778.

COPY OF A LETTER

TO MESS. ******* ****** AND CO.
BRISTOL.

GENTLEMEN,

It gives me the most sensible concern to find, that my vote on the resolutions relative to the trade of Ireland, has not been fortunate enough to meet with your approbation. I have explained at large the grounds of my conduct on that occasion in my letters to the Merchants Hall: but my very sincere regard and esteem for you will not permit me to let the matter pass without an explanation, which is particular to yourselves, and which, I hope, will prove satisfactory to you.

You tell me, that the conduct of your late member is not much wondered at; but you seem to be at a loss to account for mine; and you lament, that I have taken so decided a part *against* my constituents.

This is rather an heavy imputation. Does it then really appear to you, that the propositions to which you refer, are, on the face of them, so manifestly wrong, and so certainly injurious to the trade and manufactures of Great Britain, and particularly to yours, that no man could think of proposing, or supporting them, except from resentment to you, or from some other oblique motive? If you suppose your late members, or if you suppose me, to act upon other reasons than we choose to avow, to what do you attribute the conduct of the *other* members, who in the beginning almost unanimously adopted those resolutions? To what do you attribute the strong part taken by the ministers, and along with the ministers, by several of their most declared opponents? This does not indicate a ministerial job; a party design; or a provincial or local purpose. It is therefore not so absolutely clear, that the measure is wrong, or likely to be injurious to the true interests of any place, or any person.

The reason, gentlemen, for taking this step, at this time, is but too obvious and too urgent. I cannot imagine, that you forget the great war, which has been carried on with so little success (and, as I thought, with so little policy) in America; or that you are not aware of the other great wars which are impending. Ireland has been called upon to repel the attacks of enemies of no small power, brought upon her by councils in which she has had no share. The very purpose and declared object of that original war, which has brought other wars, and other enemies on Ireland, was not very flattering to her dignity, her interest, or to the very principle of her liberty. Yet she submitted patiently to the evils she suffered from an attempt to subdue to *your* obedience, countries whose very commerce was not open to her. America was to be conquered, in order that Ireland should *not* trade thither; whilst the miserable trade which she is permitted to carry on to other places has been torn to pieces in the struggle. In this situation, are we neither to suffer her to have any real interest in our quarrel, or to be flattered

with the hope of any future means of bearing the burthens which she is to incur in defending herself against enemies which we have brought upon her?

I cannot set my face against such arguments. Is it quite fair to suppose, that I have no other motive for yielding to them, but a desire of acting *against* my constituents? It is for *you*, and for *your* interest, as a dear, cherished, and respected part of a valuable whole, that I have taken my share in this question. You do not, you cannot suffer by it. If honesty be true policy with regard to the transient interest of individuals, it is much more certainly so with regard to the permanent interests of communities. I know, that it is but too natural for us to see our own *certain* ruin, in the *possible* prosperity of other people. It is hard to persuade us, that every thing which is *got* by another is not *taken* from ourselves. But it is fit that we should get the better of these suggestions, which come from what is not the best and soundest part of our nature, and that we should form to ourselves a way of thinking, more rational, more just, and more religious. Trade is not a limited thing; as if the objects of mutual demand and consumption, could not stretch beyond the bounds of our jealousies. God has given the earth to the children of men, and he has undoubtedly, in giving it to them, given them what is abundantly sufficient for all their exigencies; not a scanty, but a most liberal provision for them all. The author of our nature has written it strongly in that nature, and has promulgated the same law in his written word, that man shall eat his bread by his labour; and I am persuaded, that no man, and no combination of men, for their own ideas of their particular profit, can, without great impiety, undertake to say, that he *shall not* do so; that they have no sort of right, either to prevent the labour, or to withhold the bread. Ireland having received no *compensation*, directly or indirectly, for any restraints on their trade, ought not, in justice or common honesty, to be made subject to such restraints. I do not mean to impeach the right of the parliament of Great Britain to make laws for the trade of Ireland. I only speak of what laws it is right for parliament to make.

It is nothing to an oppressed people, to say that in part they are protected at our charge. The military force which shall be kept up in order to cramp the natural faculties of a people, and to prevent their arrival to their utmost prosperity, is the instrument of their servitude, not the means of their protection. To protect men, is to forward, and not to restrain their improvement. Else, what is it more, than to avow to them, and to the world, that you guard them from others, only to make them a prey to yourself? This fundamental nature of protection does not belong to free, but to all governments; and is as valid in Turkey as in Great Britain. No government ought to own that it exists for the purpose of checking the prosperity of its people, or that there is such a principle involved in its policy.

Under the impression of these sentiments, (and not as wanting every attention to my constituents, which affection and gratitude could inspire,) I voted for these bills which give you so much trouble. I voted for them, not as doing complete justice to Ireland, but as being something less unjust than the general prohibition which has hitherto prevailed. I hear some discourse, as if in one or two paltry duties on materials, Ireland had a preference; and that those who set themselves against this act of scanty justice, assert that they are only contending for an *equality*. What equality? Do they forget, that the whole woollen manufacture of Ireland, the most extensive and profitable of any, and the natural staple of that kingdom, has been in a manner so destroyed by restrictive laws of ours, and (at our persuasion, and on our promises) by restrictive laws of *their own*, that in a few years, it is probable, they will not be able to wear a coat of their own fabric? Is this equality? Do gentlemen forget, that the understood faith upon which they were persuaded to such an unnatural act, has not been kept; but a linen-manufacture has been set up, and highly encouraged, against them? Is this equality? Do they forget the state of the trade of Ireland in beer, so great an article of consumption, and which now stands in so mischievous a position in regard to their revenue, their manufacture, and their agriculture? Do they find any equality in all this? Yet if the least step is taken towards doing them common justice in the slightest article for the most limited markets, a cry is raised, as if we were going to be ruined by partiality to Ireland.

Gentlemen, I know that the deficiency in these arguments is made up (not by you, but by others) by the usual resource on such occasions, the confidence in military force, and superiour power. But that ground of confidence, which at no time was perfectly just, or the avowal of it tolerably decent, is at this time very unseasonable. Late experience has shewn, that it cannot be altogether relied upon; and many, if not of all our present diffi-

culties, have arisen from putting our trust in what may very possibly fail; and if it should fail, leaves those who are hurt by such a reliance, without pity. Whereas honesty and justice, reason and equity, go a very great way in securing prosperity to those who use them; and in case of failure, secure the best retreat, and the most honourable consolations.

It is very unfortunate that we should consider those as rivals, whom we ought to regard as fellow-labourers in a common cause. Ireland has never made a single step in its progress towards prosperity, by which you have not had a share, and perhaps the greatest share, in the benefit. That progress has been chiefly owing to her own natural advantages, and her own efforts, which, after a long time, and by slow degrees, have prevailed in some measure over the mischievous systems which have been adopted. Far enough she is still from having arrived even at an ordinary state of perfection; and if our jealousies were to be converted into politics, as systematically as some would have them, the trade of Ireland would vanish out of the system of commerce. But believe me, if Ireland is beneficial to you, it is so not from the parts in which it is restrained, but from those in which it is left free, though not left unrivalled. The greater its freedom, the greater must be your advantage. If you should lose in one way, you will gain in twenty.

Whilst I remain under this unalterable and powerful conviction, you will not wonder at the *decided* part I take. It is my custom so to do, when I see my way clearly before me; and when I know, that I am not misled by any passion, or any personal interest; which in this case, I am very sure, I am not. I find that disagreeable things are circulated among my constituents; and I wish my sentiments, which form my justification, may be equally general with the circulation against me. I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard and esteem,

Gentlemen, Your most obedient
and humble servant,
E. B.

Westminster, May 2, 1778.

I send the bills.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH,

ON PRESENTING TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, (ON THE 11TH FEBRUARY, 1780,) A PLAN FOR THE BETTER SECURITY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF PARLIAMENT, AND THE ŒCONOMICAL REFORMATION OF THE CIVIL AND OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. Speaker,

I rise, in acquittal of my engagement to the house, in obedience to the strong and just requisitions of my constituents, and, I am persuaded, in conformity to the unanimous wishes of the whole nation, to submit to the wisdom of parliament, "A plan of reform in the constitution of several parts of the public œconomy."

I have endeavoured, that this plan should include in its execution, a considerable reduction of improper expense; that, it should effect a conversion of unprofitable titles into a productive estate; that, it should lead to, and indeed almost compel, a provident administration of such sums of public money as must remain under discretionary trusts; that, it should render the incurring debts on the civil establishment (which must ultimately affect national strength and national credit) so very difficult, as to become next to impracticable.

But what, I confess, was uppermost with me, what I bent the whole force of my mind to, was the reduction of that corrupt influence, which is itself the perennial spring of all prodigality, and of all disorder; which loads us, more than millions of debt; which takes away vigour from our arms, wisdom from our coun-

cils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of our constitution.

Sir, I assure you, very solemnly, and with a very clear conscience, that nothing in the world has led me to such an undertaking, but my zeal for the honour of this house, and the settled, habitual, systematic affection I bear to the cause, and to the principles of government.

I enter perfectly into the nature and consequences of my attempt; and I advance to it with a tremour that shakes me to the inmost fibre of my frame. I feel, that I engage in a business, in itself most ungracious, totally wide of the course of prudent conduct; and I really think, the most completely adverse that can be imagined to the natural turn and temper of my own mind. I know, that all parsimony is of a quality approaching to unkindness; and that (on some person or other) every reform must operate as a sort of punishment. Indeed the whole class of the severe and restrictive virtues, are at a market almost too high for humanity. What is worse, there are very few of those virtues which are not capable of being imitated, and even outdone in many of their most striking effects, by the worst of vices. Malignity and envy will carve much more deeply, and finish much more sharply, in the work of retrenchment, than frugality and providence. I do not, therefore, wonder, that gentlemen have kept away from such a task, as well from good-nature as from prudence. Private feeling might, indeed, be overborne by legislative reason; and a man of a long-sighted and a strong nerved humanity, might bring himself, not so much to consider from whom he takes a superfluous enjoyment, as for whom in the end he may preserve the absolute necessaries of life.

But it is much more easy to reconcile this measure to humanity, than to bring it to any agreement with prudence. I do not mean that little, selfish, pitiful, bastard thing, which sometimes goes by the name of a family in which it is not legitimate, and to which it is a disgrace;—I mean even that public and enlarged prudence, which, apprehensive of being disabled from rendering acceptable services to the world, withholds itself from those that are invidious. Gentlemen who are, with me, verging towards the decline of life, and are apt to form their ideas of kings from kings of former times, might dread the anger of a reigning prince;—they who are more provident of the future, or by being young are more interested in it, might tremble at the resentment of the successor; they might see a long, dull, dreary, unvaried vista of despair and exclusion, for half a century, before them. This is no pleasant prospect at the outset of a political journey.

Besides this, Sir, the private enemies to be made in all attempts of this kind are innumerable; and their enmity will be the more bitter, and the more dangerous too, because a sense of dignity will oblige them to conceal the cause of their resentment. Very few men of great families and extensive connections, but will feel the smart of a cutting reform, in some close relation, some bosom friend, some pleasant acquaintance, some dear protected dependant. Emolument is taken from some; patronage from others; objects of pursuit from all. Men, forced into an involuntary independence, will abhor the authors of a blessing which in their eyes has so very near a resemblance to a curse. When officers are removed, and the offices remain, you may set the gratitude of some against the anger of others; you may oppose the friend you oblige against the enemies you provoke. But services of the present sort create no attachments. The individual good felt in a public benefit, is comparatively so small, comes round through such an involved labyrinth of intricate and tedious revolutions; whilst a present personal detriment is so heavy, where it falls, and so instant in its operation, that the cold commendation of a public advantage never was, and never will be, a match for the quick sensibility of a private loss: and you may depend upon it, Sir, that when many people have an interest in railing, sooner or later, they will bring a considerable degree of unpopularity upon any measure. So that, for the present at least, the reformation will operate against the reformers; and revenge (as against them at the least) will produce all the effects of corruption.

This, Sir, is almost always the case, where the plan has complete success. But how stands the matter in the mere attempt? Nothing, you know, is more common, than for men to wish, and call loudly too, for a reformation, who, when it arrives, do by no means like the severity of its aspect. Reformation is one of those pieces which must be put at some distance in order to please. Its greatest favourers love it better in the abstract than in the substance. When any old prejudice of their own, or any interest that they value, is touched, they become scrupulous, they become captious, and every man has his separate exception. Some pluck out the black hairs, some the gray; one point must be given up to one; another

point must be yielded to another; nothing is suffered to prevail upon its own principle; the whole is so frittered down, and disjointed, that scarcely a trace of the original scheme remains! Thus, between the resistance of power, and the unsystematical process of popularity, the undertaker and the undertaking are both exposed, and the poor reformer is hissed off the stage, both by friends and foes.

Observe, Sir, that the apology for my undertaking (an apology, which, though long, is no longer than necessary) is not grounded on my want of the fullest sense of the difficult and invidious nature of the task I undertake. I risk odium if I succeed, and contempt if I fail. My excuse must rest in mine and your conviction of the absolute, urgent *necessity* there is, that something of the kind should be done. If there is any sacrifice to be made, either of estimation or of fortune, the smallest is the best. Commanders in chief are not to be put upon the forlorn hope. But, indeed it is necessary that the attempt should be made. It is necessary from our own political circumstances; it is necessary from the operations of the enemy; it is necessary from the demands of the people; whose desires, when they do not militate with the stable and eternal rules of justice and reason (rules which are above us, and above them) ought to be as a law to a house of commons.

As to our circumstances, I do not mean to aggravate the difficulties of them, by the strength of any colouring whatsoever. On the contrary, I observe, and observe with pleasure, that our affairs rather wear a more promising aspect than they did on the opening of this session. We have had some leading successes. But those who rate them at the highest (higher a great deal indeed than I dare to do) are of opinion, that, upon the ground of such advantages, we cannot at this time hope to make any treaty of peace, which would not be ruinous and completely disgraceful. In such an anxious state of things, if dawnings of success serve to animate our diligence, they are good; if they tend to increase our presumption, they are worse than defeats. The state of our affairs shall then be as promising as any one may choose to conceive it: it is, however, but promising. We must recollect, that with but half of our natural strength, we are at war against confederated powers, who have singly threatened us with ruin; we must recollect, that whilst we are left naked on one side, our other flank is uncovered by any alliance; that whilst we are weighing and balancing our successes against our losses, we are accumulating debt to the amount of at least fourteen millions in the year. That loss is certain.

I have no wish to deny, that our successes are as brilliant as any one chooses to make them; our resources too may, for me, be as unfathomable as they are represented. Indeed they are just whatever the people possess, and will submit to pay. Taxing is an easy business. Any projector can contrive new impositions; any bungler can add to the old But is it altogether wise to have no other bounds to your impositions, than the patience of those who are to bear them?

All I claim upon the subject of your resources is this, that they are not likely to be increased by wasting them.—I think I shall be permitted to assume, that a system of frugality will not lessen your riches, whatever they may be;—I believe it will not be hotly disputed, that those resources which lie heavy on the subject, ought not to be objects of preference; that they ought not to be the *very first choice*, to an honest representative of the people.

This is all, Sir, that I shall say upon our circumstances and our resources: I mean to say a little more on the operations of the enemy, because this matter seems to me very natural in our present deliberation. When I look to the other side of the water, I cannot help recollecting what Pyrrhus said on reconnoitring the Roman camp, "These barbarians have nothing barbarous in their discipline." When I look, as I have pretty carefully looked, into the proceedings of the French king, I am sorry to say it, I see nothing of the character and genius of arbitrary finance; none of the bold frauds of bankrupt power; none of the wild struggles, and plunges, of despotism in distress;—no lopping off from the capital of debt;—no suspension of interest;—no robbery under the name of loan;—no raising the value, no debasing the substance of the coin. I see neither Louis the Fourteenth nor Louis the Fifteenth. On the contrary, I behold with astonishment, rising before me, by the very hands of arbitrary power, and in the very midst of war and confusion, a regular, methodical system of public credit; I behold a fabric laid on the natural and solid foundations of trust and confidence among men; and raising, by fair gradations, order over order, according to the just rules of symmetry and art. What a reverse of things! Principle, method, regularity, œconomy, frugality, justice to individuals, and care of the people, are the resources with which France makes war upon Great Britain. God avert the omen! But if we should see any

genius in war and politics arise in France to second what is done in the heavens!—I turn my eyes from the consequences.

The noble lord in the blue riband, last year, treated all this with contempt. He never could conceive it possible that the French minister of finance could go through that year with a loan of but seventeen hundred thousand pounds; and that he should be able to fund that loan without any tax. The second year, however, opens the very same scene. A small loan, a loan of no more than two millions five hundred thousand pounds, is to carry our enemies through the service of this year also. No tax is raised to fund that debt; no tax is raised for the current services. I am credibly informed that there is no anticipation whatsoever. Compensations* are correctly made. Old debts continue to be sunk as in the time of profound peace. Even payments which their treasury had been authorized to suspend during the time of war, are not suspended.

A general reform, executed through every *department of the revenue*, creates an annual income of more than half a million, whilst it facilitates and simplifies all the functions of administration. The king's *household*—at the remotest avenues to which all reformation has been hitherto stopped, that household, which has been the strong hold of prodigality, the virgin fortress which was never before attacked—has been not only not defended, but it has, even in the forms, been surrendered by the king to the œconomy of his minister. No capitulation; no reserve. Œconomy has entered in triumph into the public splendour of the monarch, into his private amusements, into the appointments of his nearest and highest relations. Œconomy and public spirit have made a beneficent and an honest spoil; they have plundered, from extravagance and luxury, for the use of substantial service, a revenue of near four hundred thousand pounds. The reform of the finances, joined to this reform of the court, gives to the public nine hundred thousand pounds a year and upwards.

The minister who does these things is a great man—But the king who desires that they should be done, is a far greater. We must do justice to our enemies—These are the acts of a patriot king. I am not in dread of the vast armies of France: I am not in dread of the gallant spirit of its brave and numerous nobility: I am not alarmed even at the great navy which has been so miraculously created. All these things Louis the Fourteenth had before. With all these things, the French monarchy has more than once fallen prostrate at the feet of the public faith of Great Britain. It was the want of public credit which disabled France from recovering after her defeats, or recovering even from her victories and triumphs. It was a prodigal court, it was an ill-ordered revenue, that sapped the foundations of all her greatness. Credit cannot exist under the arm of necessity. Necessity strikes at credit, I allow, with a heavier and quicker blow under an arbitrary monarchy, than under a limited and balanced government: but still necessity and credit are natural enemies, and cannot be long reconciled in any situation. From necessity and corruption, a free state may lose the spirit of that complex constitution which is the foundation of confidence. On the other hand, I am far from being sure, that a monarchy, when once it is properly regulated, may not for a long time furnish a foundation for credit upon the solidity of its maxims, though it affords no ground of trust in its institutions. I am afraid I see in England and in France, something like a beginning of both these things. I wish I may be found in a mistake.

This very short, and very imperfect state of what is now going on in France (the last circumstance of which I received in about eight days after the registry of the edict)* I do not, Sir, lay before you for any invidious purpose. It is in order to excite in us the spirit of a noble emulation.—Let the nations make war upon each other (since we must make war) not with a low and vulgar malignity, but by a competition of virtues. This is the only way by which both parties can gain by war. The French have imitated us; let us, through them, imitate ourselves; ourselves in our better and happier days. If public frugality, under whatever men, or in whatever mode of government, is national strength, it is a strength which our enemies are in possession of before us.

Sir, I am well aware, that the state and the result of the French œconomy which I have laid before you, are even now lightly treated by some, who ought never to speak but from information. Pains have not been spared to represent them as impositions on the public. Let me tell you, Sir, that the creation of a navy, and a two years war without taxing, are a very singular species of imposture. But be it so. For what end does Neckar carry on this delu-

* This term comprehends various retributions made to persons whose offices are taken away, or who, in any other way, suffer by the new arrangements that are made.

* Edict, registered 29th January, 1780.

sion? Is it to lower the estimation of the crown he serves, and to render his own administration contemptible? No! No! He is conscious, that the sense of mankind is so clear and decided in favour of œconomy, and of the weight and value of its resources, that he turns himself to every species of fraud and artifice, to obtain the mere reputation of it. Men do not affect a conduct that tends to their discredit. Let us, then, get the better of Monsieur Neckar in his own way—Let us do in reality what he does only in pretence.—Let us turn his French tinsel into English gold. Is then the mere opinion and appearance of frugality and good management of such use to France, and is the substance to be so mischievous to England? Is the very constitution of nature so altered by a sea of twenty miles, that œconomy should give power on the continent, and that profusion should give it here? For God's sake let not this be the only fashion of France which we refuse to copy.

To the last kind of necessity, the desires of the people, I have but a very few words to say. The ministers seem to contest this point; and affect to doubt, whether the people do really desire a plan of œconomy in the civil government. Sir, this is too ridiculous. It is impossible that they should not desire it. It is impossible that a prodigality which draws its resources from their indigence, should be pleasing to them. Little factions of pensioners, and their dependants, may talk another language. But the voice of nature is against them; and it will be heard. The people of England will not, they cannot take it kindly, that representatives should refuse to their constituents, what an absolute sovereign voluntarily offers to his subjects. The expression of the petitions is, that "*before any new burthens are laid upon this country, effectual measures be taken by this house, to enquire into, and correct, the gross abuses in the expenditure of public money.*"

This has been treated by the noble lord in the blue riband as a wild factious language. It happens, however, that the people in their address to us, use almost word for word the same terms as the king of France uses in addressing himself to his people; and it differs only, as it falls short of the French king's idea of what is due to his subjects. "To convince," says he, "our faithful subjects of *the desire we entertain not to recur to new impositions*, until we have first exhausted all the resources which order and œconomy can possibly supply," &c. &c.

These desires of the people of England which come far short of the voluntary concessions of the king of France, are moderate indeed. They only contend that we should interweave some œconomy with the taxes with which we have chosen to begin the war. They request, not that you should rely upon œconomy exclusively, but that you should give it rank and precedence, in the order of the ways and means of this single session.

But if it were possible, that the desires of our constituents, desires which are at once so natural, and so very much tempered and subdued, should have no weight with a house of commons, which has its eye elsewhere; I would turn my eyes to the very quarter to which theirs are directed. I would reason this matter with the house, on the mere policy of the question; and I would undertake to prove, that an early dereliction of abuse, is the direct interest of government; of government taken abstractedly from its duties, and considered merely as a system intending its own conservation.

If there is any one eminent criterion, which, above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is this:—"well to know the best time and manner of yielding, what it is impossible to keep."—There have been, Sir, and there are, many who choose to chicane with their situation, rather than be instructed by it. Those gentlemen argue against every desire of reformation, upon the principles of a criminal prosecution. It is enough for them to justify their adherence to a pernicious system, that it is not of their contrivance; that it is an inheritance of absurdity, derived to them from their ancestors; that they can make out a long and unbroken pedigree of mismanagers that have gone before them. They are proud of the antiquity of their house; and they defend their errours, as if they were defending their inheritance: afraid of derogating from their nobility; and carefully avoiding a sort of blot in their scutcheon, which they think would degrade them for ever.

It was thus that the unfortunate Charles the First defended himself on the practice of the Stuart who went before him, and of all the Tudors; his partisans might have gone to the Plantagenets.—They might have found bad examples enough, both abroad and at home, that could have shewn an ancient and illustrious descent. But there is a time, when men will not suffer bad things because their ancestors have suffered worse. There is a time, when the hoary head of inveterate abuse will neither draw reverence, nor obtain protection.

If the noble lord in the blue riband pleads "*not guilty*," to the charges brought against the present system of public œconomy, it is not possible to give a fair verdict by which he will not stand acquitted. But pleading is not our present business. His plea or his traverse may be allowed as an answer to a charge, when a charge is made. But if he puts himself in the way to obstruct reformation, then the faults of his office instantly become his own. Instead of a public officer in an abusive department, whose province is an object to be regulated, he becomes a criminal who is to be punished. I do most seriously put it to administration, to consider the wisdom of a timely reform. Early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy: early reformations are made in cool blood; late reformations are made under a state of inflammation. In that state of things the people behold in government nothing that is respectable. They see the abuse, and they will see nothing else—They fall into the temper of a furious populace provoked at the disorder of a house of ill fame; they never attempt to correct or regulate; they go to work by the shortest way—They abate the nuisance, they pull down the house.

This is my opinion with regard to the true interest of government. But as it is the interest of government that reformation should be early, it is the interest of the people that it should be temperate. It is their interest, because a temperate reform is permanent; and because it has a principle of growth. Whenever we improve, it is right to leave room for a further improvement. It is right to consider, to look about us, to examine the effect of what we have done.—Then we can proceed with confidence, because we can proceed with intelligence. Whereas in hot reformations, in what men, more zealous than considerate, call *making clear work*, the whole is generally so crude, so harsh, so indigested; mixed with so much imprudence, and so much injustice; so contrary to the whole course of human nature, and human institutions, that the very people who are most eager for it, are among the first to grow disgusted at what they have done. Then some part of the abdicated grievance is called from its exile in order to become a corrective of the correction. Then the abuse assumes all the credit and popularity of a reform. The very idea of purity and disinterestedness in politics falls into disrepute, and is considered as a vision of hot and inexperienced men; and thus disorders become incurable, not by the virulence of their own quality, but by the unapt and violent nature of the remedies. A great part, therefore, of my idea of reform, is meant to operate gradually; some benefits will come at a nearer, some at a more remote period. We must no more make haste to be rich by parsimony, than by intemperate acquisition.

In my opinion, it is our duty when we have the desires of the people before us, to pursue them, not in the spirit of literal obedience, which may militate with their very principle, much less to treat them with a peevish and contentious litigation, as if we were adverse parties in a suit. It would, Sir, be most dishonourable for a faithful representative of the commons, to take advantage of any inartificial expression of the people's wishes, in order to frustrate their attainment of what they have an undoubted right to expect. We are under infinite obligations to our constituents, who have raised us to so distinguished a trust, and have imparted such a degree of sanctity to common characters. We ought to walk before them with purity, plainness, and integrity of heart; with filial love, and not with slavish fear, which is always a low and tricking thing. For my own part, in what I have meditated upon that subject, I cannot indeed take upon me to say I have the honour *to follow* the sense of the people. The truth is, *I met it on the way*, while I was pursuing their interest according to my own ideas. I am happy beyond expression to find that my intentions have so far coincided with theirs, that I have not had cause to be in the least scrupulous to sign their petition, conceiving it to express my own opinions, as nearly as general terms can express the object of particular arrangements.

I am therefore satisfied to act as a fair mediator between government and the people, endeavouring to form a plan which should have both an early and a temperate operation. I mean, that it should be substantial; that it should be systematic. That it should rather strike at the first cause of prodigality and corrupt influence, than attempt to follow them in all their effects.

It was to fulfil the first of these objects (the proposal of something substantial) that I found myself obliged, at the outset, to reject a plan proposed by an honourable and attentive member* of parliament, with very good intentions on his part, about a year or two ago. Sir, the plan I speak of was the tax of 25 *per cent.*

* Thomas Gilbert, Esq. member for Litchfield.

moved upon places and pensions during the continuance of the American war.—Nothing, Sir, could have met my ideas more than such a tax if it was considered as a practical satire on that war, and as a penalty upon those who led us into it; but in any other view it appeared to me very liable to objections. I considered the scheme as neither substantial, nor permanent, nor systematical, nor likely to be a corrective of evil influence. I have always thought employments a very proper subject of regulation, but a very ill-chosen subject for a tax. An equal tax upon property is reasonable; because the object is of the same quality throughout. The species is the same, it differs only in its quantity: but a tax upon salaries is totally of a different nature; there can be no equality, and consequently no justice, in taxing them by the hundred, in the gross.

We have, Sir, on our establishment, several offices which perform real service—We have also places that provide large rewards for no service at all. We have stations which are made for the public decorum; made for preserving the grace and majesty of a great people—We have likewise expensive formalities, which tend rather to the disgrace than the ornament of the state and the court. This, Sir, is the real condition of our establishments. To fall with the same severity on objects so perfectly dissimilar, is the very reverse of a reformation. I mean a reformation framed, as all serious things ought to be, in number, weight and measure.—Suppose, for instance, that two men receive a salary of 800*l.* a year each.—In the office of one there is nothing at all to be done; in the other, the occupier is oppressed by its duties.—Strike off twenty-five *per cent.* from these two offices, you take from one man 200*l.* which in justice he ought to have, and you give in effect to the other 600*l.* which he ought not to receive. The public robs the former, and the latter robs the public; and this mode of mutual robbery is the only way in which the office and the public can make up their accounts.

But the balance in settling the account of this double injustice, is much against the state. The result is short. You purchase a saving of two hundred pounds, by a profusion of six. Besides, Sir, whilst you leave a supply of unsecured money behind, wholly at the discretion of ministers, they make up the tax to such places as they wish to favour, or in such new places as they may choose to create. Thus the civil list becomes oppressed with debt; and the public is obliged to repay, and to repay with an heavy interest, what it has taken by an injudicious tax. Such has been the effect of the taxes hitherto laid on pensions and employments, and it is no encouragement to recur again to the same expedient.

In effect, such a scheme is not calculated to produce, but to prevent, reformation. It holds out a shadow of present gain to a needy and necessitous public, to divert their attention from those abuses, which in reality are the great causes of their wants. It is a composition to stay inquiry; it is a fine paid by mismanagement, for the renewal of its lease. What is worse, it is a fine paid by industry and merit, for an indemnity to the idle and the worthless. But I shall say no more upon this topic, because (whatever may be given out to the contrary) I know that the noble lord in the blue riband perfectly agrees with me in these sentiments.

After all that I have said on this subject, I am so sensible, that it is our duty to try every thing which may contribute to the relief of the nation, that I do not attempt wholly to reprobate the idea even of a tax. Whenever, Sir, the incumbrance of useless office (which lies no less a dead weight upon the service of the state, than upon its revenues) shall be removed;—when the remaining offices shall be classed according to the just proportion of their rewards and services, so as to admit the application of an equal rule to their taxation; when the discretionary power over the civil list cash shall be so regulated, that a minister shall no longer have the means of repaying with a private, what is taken by a public hand—if after all these preliminary regulations, it should be thought that a tax on places is an object worthy of the public attention, I shall be very ready to lend my hand to a reduction of their emoluments.

Having thus, Sir, not so much absolutely rejected, as postponed, the plan of a taxation of office,—my next business was to find something which might be really substantial and effectual. I am quite clear, that if we do not go to the very origin, and first ruling cause of grievances, we do nothing. What does it signify to turn abuses out of one door, if we are to let them in at another? What does it signify to promote œconomy upon a measure, and to suffer it to be subverted in the principle? Our ministers are far from being wholly to blame for the present ill order which prevails. Whilst institutions directly repugnant to good management, are suffered to remain, no effectual or lasting reform can be introduced.

I therefore thought it necessary, as soon as I conceived thoughts of submitting to you

some plan of reform, to take a comprehensive view of the state of this country; to make a sort of survey of its jurisdictions, its estates, and its establishments. Something in every one of them seemed to me to stand in the way of all œconomy in their administration, and prevented every possibility of methodizing the system. But being, as I ought to be doubtful of myself, I was resolved not to proceed in an *arbitrary* manner in any particular which tended to change the settled state of things, or in any degree to affect the fortune or situation, the interest or the importance, of any individual. By an arbitrary proceeding, I mean one conducted by the private opinions, tastes, or feelings, of the man who attempts to regulate. These private measures are not standards of the exchequer, nor balances of the sanctuary. General principles cannot be debauched or corrupted by interest or caprice; and by those principles I was resolved to work.

Sir, before I proceed further, I will lay these principles fairly before you, that afterwards you may be in a condition to judge whether every object of regulation, as I propose it, comes fairly under its rule. This will exceedingly shorten all discussion between us, if we are perfectly in earnest in establishing a system of good management. I therefore lay down to myself seven fundamental rules; they might indeed be reduced to two or three simple maxims, but they would be too general, and their application to the several heads of the business before us, would not be so distinct and visible. I conceive, then,

First, That all jurisdictions which furnish more matter of expense, more temptations to oppression, or more means and instruments of corrupt influence, than advantage to justice or political administration, ought to be abolished.

Secondly, That all public estates which are more subservient to the purposes of vexing, overawing, and influencing those who hold under them, and to the expense of perception and management, than of benefit to the revenue, ought, upon every principle, both of revenue and of freedom, to be disposed of.

Thirdly, That all offices which bring more charge than proportional advantage to the state; that all offices which may be engrafted on others, uniting and simplifying their duties, ought in the first case, to be taken away; and in the second, to be consolidated.

Fourthly, That all such offices ought to be abolished, as obstruct the prospect of the general superintendant of finance; which destroys his superintendancy, which disable him from foreseeing and providing for charges as they may occur; from preventing expense in its origin, checking it in its progress, or securing its application to its proper purposes. A minister, under whom expenses can be made without his knowledge, can never say what it is that he can spend, or what it is that he can save.

Fifthly, That it is proper to establish an invariable order in all payments; which will prevent partiality; which will give preference to services, not according to the importunity of the demandant, but the rank and order of their utility or their justice.

Sixthly, That it is right to reduce every establishment, and every part of an establishment (as nearly as possible) to certainty, the life of all order and good management.

Seventhly, That all subordinate treasuries, as the nurseries of mismanagement, and as naturally drawing to themselves as much money as they can, keeping it as long as they can, and accounting for it as late as they can, ought to be dissolved. They have a tendency to perplex and distract the public accounts, and to excite a suspicion of government even beyond the extent of their abuse.

Under the authority and with the guidance of those principles, I proceed; wishing that nothing in any establishment may be changed, where I am not able to make a strong, direct, and solid application of those principles, or of some one of them. An œconomical constitution is a necessary basis for an œconomical administration.

First, with regard to the sovereign jurisdictions, I must observe, Sir, that whoever takes a view of this kingdom in a cursory manner, will imagine, that he beholds a solid, compacted, uniform system of monarchy; in which all inferiour jurisdictions are but as rays diverging from one centre. But on examining it more nearly, you find much eccentricity and confusion. It is not a monarchy in strictness. But, as in the Saxon times this country was an heptarchy, it is now a strange sort of *pentarchy*. It is divided into five several distinct principalities, besides the supreme. There is indeed this difference from the Saxon times, that as in the itinerant exhibitions of the stage, for want of a complete company, they are obliged to throw a variety of parts on their chief performer; so our sovereign condescends himself to act not on the principal but all the

subordinate parts in the play. He condescends to dissipate the royal character, and to trifle with those light subordinate lacquered sceptres in those hands that sustain the ball, representing the world, or which wield the trident that commands the ocean. Cross a brook, and you lose the king of England; but you have some comfort in coming again under his majesty, though "shorn of his beams," and no more than prince of Wales. Go to the north, and you find him dwindled to a duke of Lancaster; turn to the west of that north, and he pops upon you in the humble character of earl of Chester. Travel a few miles on, the earl of Chester disappears; and the king surprises you again as count palatine of Lancaster. If you travel beyond Mount Edgecomb, you find him once more in his incognito, and he is duke of Cornwall. So that, quite fatigued and satiated with this dull variety, you are infinitely refreshed when you return to the sphere of his proper splendour, and behold your amiable sovereign in his true, simple, undisguised, native character of majesty.

In every one of these five principalities, duchies, palatinates, there is a regular establishment of considerable expense, and most domineering influence. As his majesty submits to appear in this state of subordination to himself, his loyal peers and faithful commons attend his royal transformations; and are not so nice as to refuse to nibble at those crumbs of emoluments, which console their petty metamorphoses. Thus every one of those principalities has the apparatus of a kingdom, for the jurisdiction over a few private estates; and the formality and charge of the exchequer of Great Britain, for collecting the rents of a country 'squire. Cornwall is the best of them; but when you compare the charge with the receipt, you will find that it furnishes no exception to the general rule. The duchy and county palatine of Lancaster do not yield, as I have reason to believe, on an average of twenty years, four thousand pounds a year, clear to the crown. As to Wales, and the county palatine of Chester, I have my doubts, whether their productive exchequer yields any returns at all. Yet one may say, that this revenue is more faithfully applied to its purposes than any of the rest; as it exist for the sole purpose of multiplying offices, and extending influence.

An attempt was lately made to improve this branch of local influence, and to transfer it to the fund of general corruption. I have on the seat behind me, the constitution of Mr. John Probert, a knight-errant, dubbed by the noble lord in the blue riband, and sent to search for revenues and adventures upon the mountains of Wales. The commission is remarkable; and the event not less so. The commission sets forth, that "Upon a report of the *deputy auditor* (for there is a deputy auditor) of the principality of Wales, it appeared, that his majesty's land revenues in the said principality, *are greatly diminished*;"—and "that upon a *report* of the *surveyor general* of his majesty's land revenues, upon a *memorial* of the auditor of his majesty's revenues *within the said principality*, that his mines and forests have produced very *little profit either to the public revenue or to individuals*;"—and therefore they appoint Mr. Probert, with a pension of three hundred pounds a year from the said principality, to try whether he can make any thing more of that very *little* which is stated to be so *greatly* diminished. "*A beggarly account of empty boxes.*" And yet, Sir, you will remark—that this diminution from littleness (which serves only to prove the infinite divisibility of matter) was not for want of the tender, and officious care (as we see) of surveyors general, and surveyors particular; of auditors and deputy auditors; not for want of memorials, and remonstrances, and reports, and commissions, and constitutions, and inquisitions, and pensions.

Probert, thus armed and accoutred—and paid, proceeded on his adventure; but he was no sooner arrived on the confines of Wales, than all Wales was in arms to meet him. That nation is brave, and full of spirit. Since the invasion of king Edward, and the massacre of the bards, there never was such a tumult, and alarm, and uproar, through the region of *Prestatyn*. *Snowden* shook to its base; *Cader Idris* was loosened from its foundations. The fury of litigious war blew her horn on the mountains. The rocks poured down their goatherds, and the deep caverns vomited out their miners. Every thing above ground, and every thing under ground, was in arms.

In short, Sir, to alight from my Welsh Pegasus, and to come to level ground; the *Preux Chevalier* Probert went to look for revenues like his masters upon other occasions; and like his masters, he found rebellion. But we were grown cautious by experience. A civil war of paper might end in a more serious war; for now remonstrance met remonstrance, and memorial was opposed to memorial. The wise Britons thought it more reasonable that the poor wasted decrepid revenue of the principality, should die a natural than a violent death.

In truth, Sir, the attempt was no less an affront upon the understanding of that respectable people, than it was an attack on their property. They chose rather that their ancient moss-grown castles should moulder into decay, under the silent touches of time, and the slow formality of an oblivious and drowsy exchequer, than that they should be battered down all at once, by the lively efforts of a pensioned engineer. As it is the fortune of the noble lord, to whom the auspices of this campaign belonged, frequently to provoke resistance, so it is his rule and nature to yield to that resistance *in all cases whatsoever*. He was true to himself on this occasion. He submitted with spirit to the spirited remonstrances of the Welsh. Mr. Probert gave up this adventure, and keeps his pension—and so ends "the famous history of the revenue adventures of the bold baron North, and the good knight Probert, upon the mountains of Venodotia."

In such a state is the exchequer of Wales at present, that upon the report of the treasury itself, its *little* revenue is *greatly* diminished; and we see by the whole of this strange transaction, that an attempt to improve it produces resistance; the resistance produces submission; and the whole ends in pension.*

It is nearly the same with the revenues of the duchy of Lancaster. To do nothing with them is extinction; to improve them is oppression. Indeed, the whole of the estates which support these minor principalities, is made up, not of revenues and rents, and profitable fines, but of claims, of pretensions, of vexations, of litigations. They are exchequers of unfrequent receipt, and constant charge; a system of finances not fit for an œconomist who would be rich; not fit for a prince who would govern his subjects with equity and justice.

It is not only between prince and subject, that these mock jurisdictions, and mimic revenues produce great mischief. They excite among the people a spirit of informing, and delating; a spirit of supplanting and undermining one another. So that many in such circumstances, conceive it advantageous to them, rather to continue subject to vexation themselves, than to give up the means and chance of vexing others. It is exceedingly common for men to contract their love to their country, into an attachment to its petty subdivisions; and they sometimes even cling to their provincial abuses, as if they were franchises and local privileges. Accordingly, in places, where there is much of this kind of estate, persons will be always found, who would rather trust to their talents in recommending themselves to power for the renewal of their interests, than to incumber their purses, though never so lightly, in order to transmit independence to their posterity. It is a great mistake, that the desire of securing property is universal among mankind. Gaming is a principle inherent in human nature. It belongs to us all. I would therefore break those tables; I would furnish no evil occupation for that spirit. I would make every man look every where, except to the intrigue of a court, for the improvement of his circumstances, or the security of his fortune. I have in my eye a very strong case in the duchy of Lancaster, (which lately occupied Westminster-hall, and the house of lords,) as my voucher for many of these reflections.*

For what plausible reason are these principalities suffered to exist? When a government is rendered complex (which in itself is no desirable thing) it ought to be for some political end, which cannot be answered otherwise. Subdivisions in government, are only admissible in favour of the dignity of inferiour princes, and high nobility; or for the support of an aristocratic confederacy under some head; or for the conservation of the franchises of the people in some privileged province. For the two former of these ends, such are the subdivisions in favour of the electoral and other princes in the empire; for the latter of these purposes are the jurisdiction of the imperial cities, and the Hanse towns. For the latter of these ends are also the countries of the States [*Pais d'Etats*] and certain cities, and orders in France. These are all regulations with an object, and some of them with a very good object. But how are the principles of any of these subdivisions applicable in the case before us?

Do they answer any purpose to the king? The principality of Wales was given by patent to Edward the Black Prince, on the ground on which it has since stood.—Lord Coke sagaciously observes upon it, "That in the charter

* Here Lord North shook his head, and told those who sat near him, that Mr. Probert's pension was to depend on his success. It may be so. Mr. Probert's pension was, however, no essential part of the question; nor did Mr. B. care whether he still possessed it or not. His point was, to shew the ridicule of attempting an improvement of the Welsh revenue under its present establishment.

* Case of Richard Lee, Esq. appellant, against George Venables Lord Vernon, respondent, in the year 1776.

of creating the Black Prince Edward prince of Wales, there is a *great mystery*—for *less* than an estate of inheritance, so *great* a prince *could* not have, and an *absolute state of inheritance* in so *great* a principality as Wales (this principality being *so dear* to him) he *should* not have; and therefore it was made, *sibi et heredibus suis regibus Angliæ*, that by his decease, or attaining to the crown, it might be extinguished in the crown."

For the sake of this foolish *mystery*, of what a great prince *could* not have *less*, and *should* not have *so much*, of a principality which was too *dear* to be given, and too *great* to be kept—and for no other cause that ever I could find—this form and shadow of a principality, without any substance, has been maintained. That you may judge in this instance (and it serves for the rest) of the difference between a great and a little œconomy, you will please to recollect, Sir, that Wales may be about the tenth part of England in size and population; and certainly not a hundredth part in opulence. Twelve judges perform the whole of the business, both of the stationary and itinerant justice of this kingdom; but for Wales there are eight judges. There is in Wales an exchequer, as well as in all the duchies, according to the very best and most authentic absurdity of form. There are in all of them, a hundred more difficult trifles and laborious fooleries, which serve no other purpose than to keep alive corrupt hope and servile dependence.

These principalities are so far from contributing to the ease of the king, to his wealth, or his dignity, that they render both his supreme and his subordinate authority, perfectly ridiculous. It was but the other day, that that pert, factious fellow, the duke of Lancaster, presumed to fly in the face of his liege lord, our gracious sovereign; and *associating* with a parcel of lawyers as factious as himself, to the destruction of *all law and order*, and *in committees leading directly to rebellion*—presumed to go to law with the king. The object is neither your business, nor mine. Which of the parties got the better, I really forget. I think it was (as it ought to be) the king. The material point is, that the suit cost about fifteen thousand pounds. But as the duke of Lancaster is but a sort of *duke Humphrey*, and not worth a groat, our sovereign was obliged to pay the costs of both. Indeed this art of converting a great monarch into a little prince, this royal masquerading, is a very dangerous and expensive amusement; and one of the king's *menus plaisirs*, which ought to be reformed. This duchy, which is not worth four thousand pounds a year at best, to *revenue*, is worth forty or fifty thousand to *influence*.

The duchy of Lancaster, and the county palatine of Lancaster, answered, I admit, some purpose in their original creation. They tended to make a subject imitate a prince. When Henry the Fourth from that stair ascended the throne, high-minded as he was, he was not willing to kick away the ladder. To prevent that principality from being extinguished in the crown, he severed it by act of parliament. He had a motive, such as it was; he thought his title to the crown unsound, and his possession insecure. He therefore managed a retreat in his duchy; which Lord Coke calls (I do not know why) *par multis regnis*. He flattered himself that it was practicable to make a projecting point half way down, to break his fall from the precipice of royalty; as if it were possible for one who had lost a kingdom to keep any thing else. However, it is evident that he thought so. When Henry the Fifth, united, by act of parliament, the estates of his mother to the duchy, he had the same predilection with his father, to the root of his family honours, and the same policy in enlarging the sphere of a possible retreat from the slippery royalty of the two great crowns he held. All this was changed by Edward the Fourth. He had no such family partialities, and his policy was the reverse of that of Henry the Fourth and Henry the Fifth. He accordingly again united the duchy of Lancaster to the crown. But when Henry the Seventh, who chose to consider himself as of the house of Lancaster, came to the throne, he brought with him the old pretensions, and the old politics of that house. A new act of parliament, a second time, dissevered the duchy of Lancaster from the crown; and in that line things continued until the subversion of the monarchy, when principalities and powers fell along with the throne. The duchy of Lancaster must have been extinguished, if Cromwell, who began to form ideas of aggrandizing his house, and raising the several branches of it, had not caused the duchy to be again separated from the commonwealth, by an act of the parliament of those times.

What partiality, what objects of the politics of the house of Lancaster, or of Cromwell, has his present majesty, or his majesty's family? What power have they within any of these principalities, which they have not within their kingdom? In what manner is the dignity of the nobility concerned in these principalities? What rights have the

subjects there, which they have not at least equally in every other part of the nation? These distinctions exist for no good end to the king, to the nobility, or to the people. They ought not to exist at all. If the crown (contrary to its nature, but most conformably to the whole tenour of the advice that has been lately given) should so far forget its dignity, as to contend, that these jurisdictions and revenues are estates of private property, I am rather for acting as if that groundless claim were of some weight, than for giving up that essential part of the reform. I would value the clear income, and give a clear annuity to the crown, taken on a medium produce for twenty years.

If the crown has any favourite name or title, if the subject has any matter of local accommodation within any of these jurisdictions, it is meant to preserve them; and to improve them, if any improvement can be suggested. As to the crown, reversions or titles upon the property of the people there, it is proposed to convert them from a snare to their independence, into a relief from their burthens. I propose, therefore, to unite all the five principalities to the crown, and to its ordinary jurisdiction,—to abolish all those offices that produce an useless and chargeable separation from the body of the people,—to compensate those who do not hold their offices (if any such there are) at the pleasure of the crown,—to extinguish vexatious titles by an act of short limitation,—to sell those unprofitable estates which support useless jurisdictions, and to turn the tenant-right into a fee, on such moderate terms as will better for the state than its present right, and which it is impossible for any rational tenant to refuse.

As to the duchies, their judicial œconomy may be provided for without charge. They have only to fall of course into the common county administration. A commission more or less made or omitted, settles the matter fully. As to Wales it has been proposed to add a judge to the several courts of Westminster-hall; and it has been considered as an improvement in itself. For my part, I cannot pretend to speak upon it with clearness or with decision; but certainly this arrangement would be more than sufficient for Wales. My original thought was to suppress five of the eight judges; and to leave the chief justice of Chester, with the two senior judges; and, to facilitate the business, to throw the twelve counties into six districts, holding the sessions alternately in the counties of which each district shall be composed. But on this I shall be more clear, when I come to the particular bill.

Sir, the house will now see whether, in praying for judgment against the minor principalities, I do not act in conformity to the laws that I had laid to myself, of getting rid of every jurisdiction more subservient to oppression and expense, than to any end of justice or honest policy; of abolishing offices more expensive than useful; of combining duties improperly separated; of changing revenues more vexatious than productive, into ready money; of suppressing offices which stand in the way of œconomy; and of cutting off lurking subordinate treasuries. Dispute the rules; controvert the application; or give your hands to this salutary measure.

Most of the same rules will be found applicable to my second object—*the landed estate of the crown*. A landed estate is certainly the very worst which the crown can possess. All minute and dispersed possessions, possessions that are often of indeterminate value, and which require a continued personal attendance, are of a nature more proper for private management, than public administration. They are fitter for the care of a frugal land steward, than of an office in the state. Whatever they may possibly have been in other times, or in other countries, they are not of magnitude enough with us, to occupy a public department, nor to provide for a public object. They are already given up to parliament, and the gift is not of great value. Common prudence dictates even in the management of private affairs, that all dispersed and chargeable estates should be sacrificed to the relief of estates more compact and better circumstanced.

If it be objected, that these lands at present would sell at a low market; this is answered, by shewing that money is at a high price. The one balances the other. Lands sell at the current rate, and nothing can sell for more. But be the price what it may, a great object is always answered, whenever any property is transferred from hands that are not fit for that property, to those that are. The buyer and seller must mutually profit by such a bargain; and, what rarely happens in matters of revenue, the relief of the subject will go hand in hand with the profit of the exchequer.

As to the *forest lands*, in which the crown has (where they are not granted or prescriptively held) the *dominion* of the *soil*, and the *vert* and *venison*; that is to say, the timber and the game, and in which the people have a variety of rights, in common of herbage, and other commons, according to the usage of the several forests;—I propose to have those rights of the crown valued as manerial rights are

valued on an inclosure; and a defined portion of land to be given for them; which land is to be sold for the public benefit.

As to the timber, I propose a survey of the whole. What is useless for the naval purposes of the kingdom, I would condemn, and dispose of for the security of what may be useful; and to inclose such other parts as may be most fit to furnish a perpetual supply; wholly extinguishing for a very obvious reason, all right of *venison* in those parts.

The forest *rights* which extend over the lands and possessions of others, being of no profit to the crown, and a grievance, as far as it goes, to the subject; these I propose to extinguish without charge to the proprietors. The several commons are to be allotted and compensated for, upon ideas which I shall hereafter explain. They are nearly the same with the principles upon which you have acted in private inclosures. I shall never quit precedents where I find them applicable. For those regulations and compensations, and for every other part of the detail, you will be so indulgent as to give me credit for the present.

The revenue to be obtained from the sale of the forest lands and rights, will not be so considerable, I believe, as many people have imagined; and I conceive it would be unwise to screw it up to the utmost, or even to suffer bidders to inhance, according to their eagerness, the purchase of objects, wherein the expense of that purchase may weaken the capital to be employed in their cultivation. This, I am well aware, might give room for partiality in the disposal. In my opinion it would be the lesser evil of the two. But I really conceive, that a rule of fair preference might be established, which would take away all sort of unjust and corrupt partiality. The principal revenue which I propose to draw from these uncultivated wastes, is to spring from the improvement and population of the kingdom; which never can happen, without producing an improvement more advantageous to the revenues of the crown, than the rents of the best landed estate which it can hold. I believe, Sir, it will hardly be necessary for me to add, that in this sale I naturally except all the houses, gardens, and parks, belonging to the crown, and such one forest as shall be chosen by his majesty, as best accommodated to his pleasures.

By means of this part of the reform, will fall the expensive office of *surveyor general*, with all the influence that attends it. By this will fall *two chief justices in Eyre*, with all their train of dependents. You need be under no apprehension, Sir, that your office is to be touched in its emoluments; they are yours by law; and they are but a moderate part of the compensation which is given to you for the ability with which you execute an office of quite another sort of importance; it is far from over-paying your diligence; or more than sufficient for sustaining the high rank you stand in, as the first gentleman of England. As to the duties of your chief justiceship, they are very different from those for which you have received the office. Your dignity is too high for a jurisdiction over wild beasts; and your learning and talents too valuable to be wasted as chief justice of a desert. I cannot reconcile it to myself, that you, Sir, should be stuck up as an useless piece of antiquity.

I have now disposed of the unprofitable landed estates of the crown, and thrown them into the mass of private property; by which they will come, through the course of circulation, and through the political secretions of the state, into our better understood and better ordered revenues.

I come next to the great supreme body of the civil government itself. I approach it with that awe and reverence with which a young physician approaches to the cure of the disorders of his parent. Disorders, Sir, and infirmities, there are—such disorders, that all attempts towards method, prudence, and frugality, will be perfectly vain, whilst a system of confusion remains, which is not only alien, but adverse to all œconomy; a system, which is not only prodigal in its very essence, but causes every thing else which belongs to it to be prodigally conducted.

It is impossible, Sir, for any person to be an œconomist where no order in payments is established; it is impossible for a man to be an œconomist, who is not able to take a comparative view of his means, and of his expenses, for the year which lies before him; it is impossible for a man to be an œconomist, under whom various officers in their several departments may spend,—even just what they please,—and often with an emulation of expense, as contributing to the importance, if not profit, of their several departments. Thus much is certain; that neither the present, nor any other first lord of the treasury, has been ever able to take a survey, or to make even a tolerable guess, of the expenses of government for any one year; so as to enable him with the least degree of certainty, or even probability, to bring his affairs within compass. Whatever scheme may be formed upon them, must be made on a calculation of chances. As things

are circumstanced, the first lord of the treasury cannot make an estimate. I am sure I serve the king, and I am sure I assist administration, by putting œconomy at least in their power. We must *class services;* we must (as far as their nature admits) *appropriate* funds; or every thing, however reformed, will fall again into the old confusion.

Coming upon this ground of the civil list, the first thing in dignity and charge that attracts our notice, is the *royal household.* This establishment, in my opinion, is exceedingly abusive in its constitution. It is formed upon manners and customs that have long since expired. In the first place, it is formed, in many respects, upon *feudal principles.* In the feudal times, it was not uncommon, even among subjects, for the lowest offices to be held by considerable persons; persons as unfit by their incapacity, as improper from their rank, to occupy such employments. They were held by patent, sometimes for life, and sometimes by inheritance. If my memory does not deceive me, a person of no slight consideration held the office of patent hereditary cook to an earl of Warwick—The earl of Warwick's soups, I fear, were not the better for the dignity of his kitchen. I think it was an earl of Gloucester, who officiated as steward of the household to the archbishops of Canterbury. Instances of the same kind may in some degree be found in the Northumberland house-book, and other family records. There was some reason in ancient necessities, for these ancient customs. Protection was wanted; and the domestic tie, though not the highest, was the closest.

The king's household has not only several strong traces of this *feudality,* but it is formed also upon the principles of a *body corporate;* it has its own magistrates, courts, and by-laws.

This might be necessary in the ancient times, in order to have a government within itself, capable of regulating the vast and often unruly multitude which composed and attended it. This was the origin of the ancient court called the *Green Cloth*—composed of the marshal, treasurer, and other great officers of the household, with certain clerks. The rich subjects of the kingdom, who had formerly the same establishments (only on a reduced scale) have since altered their œconomy; and turned the course of their expense from the maintenance of vast establishments within their walls, to the employment of a great variety of independent trades abroad. Their influence is lessened; but a mode of accommodation, and a style of splendour, suited to the manners of the times, has been increased. Royalty itself has insensibly followed; and the royal household has been carried away by the resistless tide of manners: but with this very material difference;—private men have got rid of the establishments along with the reasons of them; whereas the royal household has lost all that was stately and venerable in the antique manners, without retrenching any thing of the cumbrous charge of a Gothic establishment. It is shrunk into the polished littleness of modern elegance and personal accommodation; it has evaporated from the gross concrete, into an essence and rectified spirit of expense, where you have tuns of ancient pomp in a vial of modern luxury.

But when the reason of old establishments is gone, it is absurd to preserve nothing but the burthen of them. This is superstitiously to embalm a carcass not worth an ounce of the gums that are used to preserve it. It is to burn precious oils in the tomb; it is to offer meat and drink to the dead,—not so much an honour to the deceased, as a disgrace to the survivors. Our palaces are vast inhospitable halls. There the bleak winds, there "Boreas, and Eurus, and Caurus, and Argestes loud," howling through the vacant lobbies, and clattering the doors of deserted guard-rooms, appal the imagination, and conjure up the grim spectres of departed tyrants—the Saxon, the Norman, and the Dane; the stern Edwards and fierce Henries—who stalk from desolation to desolation, through the dreary vacuity, and melancholy succession of chill and comfortless chambers. When this tumult subsides, a dead, and still more frightful silence would reign in this desert, if every now and then the tacking of hammers did not announce, that those constant attendants upon all courts in all ages, Jobs, were still alive; for whose sake alone it is, that any trace of ancient grandeur is suffered to remain. These palaces are a true emblem of some governments; the inhabitants are decayed, but the governours and magistrates still flourish. They put me in mind of *Old Sarum,* where the representatives, more in number than the constituents, only serve to inform us, that this was once a place of trade, and sounding with "the busy hum of men," though now you can only trace the streets by the colour of the corn; and its sole manufacture is in members of parliament.

These old establishments were formed also on a third principle, still more adverse to the living œconomy of the age. They were formed, Sir, on the principle of *purveyance,* and *receipt in kind.* In former days, when the household

was vast, and the supply scanty and precarious, the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis, to purchase provision with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of a hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country, and deposited their spoil in a hundred caverns, with each its keeper. There, every commodity, received in its rawest condition, went through all the process which fitted it for use. This inconvenient receipt produced an œconomy suited only to itself. It multiplied offices beyond all measure; buttery, pantry, and all that rabble of places, which, though profitable to the holders, and expensive to the state, are almost too mean to mention.

All this might be, and I believe was, necessary at first; for it is remarkable, that *purveyance*, after its regulation had been the subject of a long line of statutes (not fewer, I think, than twenty-six) was wholly taken away by the twelfth of Charles the Second; yet in the next year of the same reign, it was found necessary to revive it by a special act of parliament, for the sake of the king's journies. This, Sir, is curious; and what would hardly be expected in so reduced a court as that of Charles the Second, and so improved a country as England might then be thought. But so it was. In our time, one well-filled and well covered stage-coach requires more accommodation than a royal progress; and every district, at an hour's warning, can supply an army.

I do not say, Sir, that all these establishments, whose principle is gone, have been systematically kept up for influence solely: neglect had its share. But this I am sure of, that a consideration of influence has hindered any one from attempting to pull them down. For the purposes of influence, and for those purposes only, are retained half at least of the household establishments. No revenue, no, not a royal revenue, can exist under the accumulated charge of ancient establishment, modern luxury, and parliamentary political corruption.

If therefore we aim at regulating this household, the question will be, whether we ought to œconomize by *detail*, or by *principle?* The example we have had of the success of an attempt to œconomize by detail, and under establishments adverse to the attempt, may tend to decide this question.

At the beginning of his majesty's reign, Lord Talbot came to the administration of a great department in the household. I believe no man ever entered into his majesty's service, or into the service of any prince, with more clear integrity, or with more zeal and affection for the interest of his master; and I must add, with abilities for a still higher service. Œconomy was then announced as a maxim of the reign. This noble lord, therefore, made several attempts towards a reform. In the year 1777, when the king's civil list debts came last to be paid, he explained very fully the success of his undertaking. He told the house of lords, that he had attempted to reduce the charges of the king's tables, and his kitchen.—The thing, Sir, was not below him. He knew that there is nothing interesting in the concerns of men, whom we love and honour, that is beneath our attention.—"Love," says one of our old poets, "esteems no office mean;" and with still more spirit, "entire affection scorneth nicer hands." Frugality, Sir, is founded on the principle, that all riches have limits. A royal household, grown enormous, even in the meanest departments, may weaken and perhaps destroy all energy in the highest offices of the state. The gorging a royal kitchen may stint and famish the negotiations of a kingdom. Therefore the object was worthy of his, was worthy of any man's attention.

In consequence of this noble lord's resolution, (as he told the other house) he reduced several tables, and put the persons entitled to them upon board wages, much to their own satisfaction. But unluckily, subsequent duties requiring constant attendance, it was not possible to prevent their being fed where they were employed—and thus this first step towards œconomy doubled the expense.

There was another disaster far more dolefut than this. I shall state it, as the cause of that misfortune lies at the bottom of almost all our prodigality. Lord Talbot attempted to reform the kitchen; but such, as he well observed, is the consequence of having duty done by one person, whilst another enjoys the emoluments, that he found himself frustrated in all his designs. On that rock his whole adventure split —His whole scheme of œconomy was dashed to pieces; his department became more expensive than ever;—the civil list debt accumulated —Why? It was truly from a cause, which, though perfectly adequate to the effect, one would not have instantly guessed;—It was because the *turnspit in the king's kitchen was a member of parliament.** The king's domestic servants were all undone; his tradesmen remained

* Vide Lord Talbot's speech in Almon's Parliamentary Register, vol. vii. p. 79, of the proceedings of the lords.

unpaid, and became bankrupt—*because the turnspit of the king's kitchen was a member of parliament.* His majesty's slumbers were interrupted, his pillow was stuffed with thorns, and his peace of mind entirely broken—*because the king's turnspit was a member of parliament.* The judges were unpaid; the justice of the kingdom bent and gave way; the foreign ministers remained inactive and unprovided; the system of Europe was dissolved; the chain of our alliances was broken; all the wheels of government at home and abroad were stopped—*because the king's turnspit was a member of parliament.*

Such, Sir, was the situation of affairs, and such the cause of that situation, when his majesty came a second time to parliament, to desire the payment of those debts which the employment of its members in various offices, visible and invisible, had occasioned. I believe that a like fate will attend every attempt at œconomy by detail, under similar circumstances, and in every department. A complex operose office of account and controul, is, in itself, and even if members of parliament had nothing to do with it, the most prodigal of all things. The most audacious robberies, or the most subtle frauds, would never venture upon such a waste, as an over-careful, detailed guard against them will infallibly produce. In our establishments, we frequently see an office of account, of an hundred pounds a year expense, and another office of an equal expense, to controul that office, and the whole upon a matter that is not worth twenty shillings.

To avoid, therefore, this minute care which produces the consequences of the most extensive neglect, and to oblige members of parliament to attend to public cares, and not to the servile offices of domestic management, I propose, Sir, to *œconomize by principle*, that is, I propose to put affairs into that train which experience points out as the most effectual, from the nature of things, and from the constitution of the human mind. In all dealings where it is possible, the principles of radical œconomy prescribe three things; first, undertaking by the great; secondly, engaging with persons of skill in the subject matter; thirdly, engaging with those who shall have an immediate and direct interest in the proper execution of the business.

To avoid frittering and crumbling down the attention by a blind unsystematic observance of every trifle, it has ever been found the best way to do all things which are great in the total amount, and minute in the component parts, by a *general contract.* The principles of trade have so pervaded every species of dealing, from the highest to the lowest objects; all transactions are got so much into system, that we may, at a moment's warning, and to a farthing value, be informed at what rate any service may be supplied. No dealing is exempt from the possibility of fraud. But by a contract on a matter certain, you have this advantage—you are sure to know the utmost *extent* of the fraud to which you are subject. By a contract with a person in *his own trade*, you are sure you shall not suffer by *want of skill.* By a *short* contract you are sure of making it the *interest* of the contractor to exert that skill for the satisfaction of his employers.

I mean to derogate nothing from the diligence or integrity of the present, or of any former board of green cloth. By what skill can members of parliament obtain that low kind of provinces? What pleasure can they have in the execution of that kind of duty? And if they should neglect it, how does it affect their interest, when we know that it is their vote in parliament, and not their diligence in cookery or catering, that recommends them to their office, or keeps them in it.

I therefore propose, that the king's tables (to whatever number of tables, or covers to each, he shall think proper to command) should be classed by the steward of the household, and should be contracted for, according to their rank, by the head or cover;—that the estimate and circumstance of the contract should be carried to the treasury to be approved; and that its faithful and satisfactory performance should be reported there previous to any payment; that there, and there only, should the payment be made. I propose, that men should be contracted with only in their proper trade; and that no member of parliament should be capable of such contract. By this plan, almost all the infinite offices under the lord steward may be spared; to the extreme simplification, and to the far better execution of every one of his functions. The king of Prussia is so served. He is a great and eminent (though indeed a very rare) instance of the possibility of uniting in a mind of vigour and compass, an attention to minute objects, with the largest views, and the most complicated plans. His tables are served by contract, and by the head. Let me say, that no prince can be ashamed to imitate the king of Prussia; and particularly to learn in his school, when the problem is—"The best manner of reconciling the state of a court with the support of war?" Other courts, I understand, have followed him with effect, and to their satisfaction.

The same clue of principle leads us through

the labyrinth of the other departments. What, Sir, is there in the office of *the great wardrobe* (which has the care of the king's furniture) that may not be executed by the *lord chamberlain himself?* He has an honourable appointment; he has time sufficient to attend to the duty; and he has the vice chamberlain to assist him. Why should not he deal also by contract, for all things belonging to this office, and carry his estimates first, and his report of the execution in its proper time, for payment, directly to the board of treasury itself? By a simple operation (containing in it a treble controul) the expenses of a department, which for naked walls, or walls hung with cobwebs, has in a few years cost the crown 150,000*l.* may at length hope for regulation. But, Sir, the office and its business are at variance. As it stands, it serves not to furnish the palace with its hangings, but the parliament with its dependent members.

To what end, Sir, does the office of *removing wardrobe* serve at all? Why should a *jewel office* exist for the sole purpose of taxing the king's gifts of plate? Its object falls naturally within the *chamberlain's* province; and ought to be under his care and inspection without any fee. Why should an office of the *robes* exist, when that of *groom of the stole* is a sinecure, and that this is a proper object of his department?

All these incumbrances, which are themselves nuisances, produce other incumbrances, and other nuisances. For the payment of these useless establishments, there are no less than *three useless treasurers;* two to hold a purse, and one to play with a stick. The treasurer of the household is a mere name. The cofferer and the treasurer of the chamber receive and pay great sums, which it is not at all necessary *they* should either receive or pay. All the proper officers, servants, and tradesmen, may be enrolled in their several departments, and paid in proper classes and times with great simplicity and order, at the exchequer, and by direction from the treasury.

The *board of works*, which in the seven years preceding 1777, has cost towards 400,000*l.*;* and (if I recollect rightly) has not cost less in proportion from the beginning of the reign, is under the very same description of all the other ill-contrived establishments, and calls for the very same reform. We are to seek for the visible signs of all this expense.—For all this expense, we do not see a building of the size and importance of a pigeon-house. Buckingham-house was reprised by a bargain with the public for one hundred thousand pounds;—and the small house at Windsor has been, if I mistake not, undertaken since that account was brought before us. The good works of that board of works, are as carefully concealed as other good works ought to be; they are perfectly invisible. But though it is the perfection of charity to be concealed, it is, Sir, the property and glory of magnificence, to appear and stand forward to the eye.

That board, which ought to be a concern of builders, and such like, and of none else, is turned into a junto of members of parliament. That office too has a *treasury*, and a paymaster of its own; and lest the arduous affairs of that important exchequer should be too fatiguing, that paymaster has a deputy to partake his profits, and relieve his cares. I do not believe, that either now or in former times, the chief managers of that board have made any profit of its abuse. It is, however, no good reason that an abusive establishment should subsist, because it is of as little private as of public advantage. But this establishment has the grand radical fault, the original sin, that pervades and perverts all our establishments;—the apparatus is not fitted to the object, nor the workmen to the work. Expenses are incurred on the private opinion of an inferiour establishment, without consulting the principal; who can alone determine the proportion which it ought to bear to the other establishments of the state, in the order of their relative importance.

I propose, therefore, along with the rest, to pull down this whole ill-contrived scaffolding, which obstructs, rather than forwards our public works; to take away its treasury; to put the whole into the hands of a real builder, who shall not be a member of parliament; and to oblige him, by a previous estimate and final payment, to appear twice at the treasury before the public can be loaded. The king's gardens are to come under a similar regulation.

The *mint*, though not a department of the household, has the same vices. It is a great expense to the nation, chiefly for the sake of members of parliament. It has its officers of parade and dignity. It has its treasury too. It is a sort of corporate body; and formerly was a body of great importance; as much so on the then scale of things, and the then order of business, as the bank is at this day. It was the great centre of money transactions and remittances for our own, and for other nations; until king Charles the First, among other arbitrary projects, dictated by despotic necessity,

* More exactly £378,616. 10s. 1 3-4d.

made it withhold the money that lay there for remittance. That blow (and happily too) the mint never recovered. Now it is no bank; no remittance-shop. The mint, Sir, is a *manufacture*, and it is nothing else; and it ought to be undertaken upon the principles of a manufacture; that is, for the best and cheapest execution, by a contract upon proper securities, and under proper regulations.

The *artillery* is a far greater object; it is a military concern; but having an affinity and kindred in its defects with the establishments I am now speaking of, I think it best to speak of it along with them. It is, I conceive, an establishment not well suited to its martial, though exceedingly well calculated for its parliamentary purposes.—Here there is a *treasury*, as in all the other inferiour departments of government. Here the military is subordinate to the civil, and the naval confounded with the land service. The object indeed is much the same in both. But when the detail is examined, it will be found that they had better be separated. For a reform of this office, I propose to restore things to what (all considerations taken together) is their natural order; to restore them to their just proportion, and to their just distribution. I propose, in this military concern, to render the civil subordinate to the military; and this will annihilate the greatest part of the expense, and all the influence belonging to the office. I propose to send the military branch to the army, and the naval to the admiralty: and I intend to perfect and accomplish the whole detail (where it becomes too minute and complicated for legislature, and requires exact, official, military, and mechanical knowledge) by a commission of competent officers in both departments. I propose to execute by contract, what by contract can be executed; and to bring, as much as possible, all estimates to be previously approved, and finally to be paid by the treasury.

Thus, by following the course of nature, and not the purposes of politics, or the accumulated patch-work of occasional accommodation, this vast expensive department may be methodized; its service proportioned to its necessities, and its payments subjected to the inspection of the superiour minister of finance; who is to judge of it on the result of the total collective exigencies of the state. This last is a reigning principle through my whole plan; and it is a principle which I hope may hereafter be applied to other plans.

By these regulations taken together—besides the three subordinate treasuries in the lesser principalities, five other subordinate treasuries are suppressed. There is taken away the whole *establishment of detail* in the household; the *treasurer*;—the *comptroller* (for a comptroller is hardly necessary where there is no treasurer);—the *cofferer of the household*;—the *treasurer of the chamber*;—the *master of the household*;—the whole *board of green cloth*;—and a vast number of subordinate offices in the department of the *steward of the household*;—the whole establishment of the *great wardrobe*;—the *removing wardrobe*;—the *jewel office*;—the *robes*;—the *board of works*;—almost the whole charge of the *civil branch* of the *board of ordnance* are taken away. All these arrangements together will be found to relieve the nation from a vast weight of influence, without distressing, but rather by forwarding every public service. When something of this kind is done, then the public may begin to breathe. Under other governments, a question of expense is only a question of œconomy, and it is nothing more; with us in every question of expense, there is always a mixture of constitutional considerations.

It is, Sir, because I wish to keep this business of subordinate treasuries as much as I can together, that I brought the *ordnance-office* before you, though it is properly a military department. For the same reason I will now trouble you with my thoughts and propositions upon two of the greatest *under treasuries*, I mean the office of *paymaster of the land forces*, or *treasurer of the army*; and that of the *treasurer of the navy*. The former of these has long been a great object of public suspicion and uneasiness. Envy too has had its share in the obloquy which is cast upon this office. But I am sure that it has no share at all in the reflections I shall make upon it, or in the reformations that I shall propose. I do not grudge to the honourable gentleman who at present holds the office, any of the effects of his talents, his merit or his fortune. He is respectable in all these particulars. I follow the constitution of the office without persecuting its holder. It is necessary in all matters of public complaint, where men frequently feel right and argue wrong, to separate prejudice from reason; and to be very sure, in attempting the redress of a grievance, that we hit upon its real seat, and its true nature. Where there is an abuse in office, the first thing that occurs in heat is to censure the officer. Our natural disposition leads all our inquiries rather to persons than to things. But this prejudice is to be corrected by maturer thinking.

Sir, the profits of the *pay-office* (as an of-

fice) are not too great, in my opinion, for its duties, and for the rank of the person who has generally held it. He has been generally a person of the highest rank; that is to say, a person of eminence and consideration in this house. The great and the invidious profits of the pay-office are from the *bank* that is held in it. According to the present course of the office, and according to the present mode of accounting there, this bank must necessarily exist somewhere. Money is a productive thing; and when the usual time of its demand can be tolerably calculated, it may, with prudence, be safely laid out to the profit of the holder. It is on this calculation that the business of banking proceeds. But no profit can be derived from the use of money, which does not make it the interest of the holder to delay his account. The process of the exchequer colludes with this interest. Is this collusion from its want of rigour and strictness, and great regularity of form? The reverse is true. They have in the exchequer brought rigour and formalism to their ultimate perfection. The process against accountants is so rigorous, and in a manner so unjust, that correctives must, from time to time, be applied to it. These correctives being discretionary, upon the case, and generally remitted by the barons to the lords of the treasury, as the best judges of the reasons for respite; hearings are had; delays are produced; and thus the extreme of rigour in office (as usual in all human affairs) leads to the extreme of laxity. What with the interested delay of the officer; the ill-conceived exactness of the court; the applications for dispensations from that exactness; the revival of rigorous process, after the expiration of the time; and the new rigours producing new applications, and new enlargements of time, such delays happen in the public accounts, that they can scarcely ever be closed.

Besides, Sir, they have a rule in the exchequer, which, I believe, they have founded upon a very ancient statute, that of the 51st of Henry III. by which it is provided, "That when a sheriff or bailiff hath began his account, none other shall be received to account until he that was first appointed hath clearly accounted, and that the sum has been received."* Whether this clause of that statute be the ground of that absurd practice, I am not quite able to ascertain. But it has very generally prevailed, though I am told that of late they have began to relax from it. In consequence of forms adverse to substantial account, we have a long succession of paymasters and their representatives, who have never been admitted to account, although perfectly ready to do so.

As the extent of our wars has scattered the accountants under the paymaster into every part of the globe, the grand and sure paymaster, Death, in all his shapes, calls these accountants to another reckoning. Death, indeed, domineers over every thing, but the forms of the exchequer. Over these he has no power. They are impassive and immortal. The audit of the exchequer, more severe than the audit to which the accountants are gone, demands proof which in the nature of things are difficult, sometimes impossible to be had. In this respect, too, rigour, as usual, defeats itself. Then, the exchequer never gives a particular receipt, or clears a man of his account, as far as it goes. A final acquittance (or a *quietus*, as they term it) is scarcely ever to be obtained. Terrours and ghosts of unlaid accountants, haunt the houses of their children from generation to generation. Families, in the course of succession, fall into minorities; the inheritance comes into the hands of females; and very perplexed affairs are often delivered over into the hands of negligent guardians and faithless stewards. So that the demand remains, when the advantage of the money is gone, if ever any advantage at all has been made of it. This is a cause of infinite distress to families; and becomes a source of influence to an extent, that can scarcely be imagined, but by those who have taken some pains to trace it. The mildness of government in the employment of useless and dangerous powers, furnishes no reason for their continuance.

As things stand, can you in justice (except perhaps in that over-perfect kind of justice which has obtained, by its merits, the title of the opposite vice*) insist that any man should, by the course of his office, keep a *bank* from whence he is to derive no advantage? That a man should be subject to demands below, and be in a manner refused acquittance above; that he should transmit an original sin, and inheritance of vexation to his posterity, without a power of compensating himself in some way or other, for so perilous a situation? We know, that if the paymaster should deny himself the advantages of his bank, the public, as things

* Et quant viscount ou bailiff ait commence de accompter, nul autre ne seit resceu de acconter tanque le primer que soit assis eit peraccompte, et que la somme soit resceu. Stat. 5. ann. dom. 1266.

* Summum jus summa injuria.

stand, is not the richer for it by a single shilling. This I thought it necessary to say, as to the offensive magnitude of the profits of this office; that we may proceed in reformation, on the principles of reason, and not on the feelings of envy.

The treasurer of the navy is, *mutatis mutandis*, in the same circumstances. Indeed all accountants are. Instead of the present mode, which is troublesome to the officer and unprofitable to the public, I propose to substitute something more effectual than rigour, which is the worst exactor in the world. I mean to remove the very temptations to delay; to facilitate the account; and to transfer this bank, now of private emolument, to the public. The crown will suffer no wrong at least from the pay-offices; and its terrours will no longer reign over the families of those who hold, or have held them. I propose that these offices should be no longer *banks* or *treasuries*, but mere *offices of administration*.—I propose, first, that the present paymaster and the treasurer of the navy, should carry into the exchequer, the whole body of the vouchers for what they have paid over to the deputy paymasters, to regimental agents, or to any of those to whom they have and ought to have paid money. I propose that those vouchers shall be admitted as actual payments in their accounts; and that the persons to whom the money has been paid, shall then stand charged in the exchequer in their place. After this process, they shall be debited or charged for nothing but the money-balance that remains in their hands.

I am conscious, Sir, that if this balance (which they could not expect to be so suddenly demanded by any usual process of the exchequer) should now be exacted all at once, not only their ruin, but a ruin of others to an extent which I do not like to think of, but which I can well conceive, and which you may well conceive, might be the consequence. I told you, Sir, when I promised before the holy-days to bring in this plan, that I never would suffer any man or description of men, to suffer from errours that naturally have grown out of the abusive constitution of those offices which I propose to regulate. If I cannot reform with equity, I will not reform at all.

For the regulation of past accounts, I shall therefore propose such a mode, as men, temperate and prudent, make use of in the management of their private affairs, when their accounts are various, perplexed, and of long standing. I would therefore, after their example, divide the public debts into three sorts; good; bad; and doubtful. In looking over the public accounts, I should never dream of the blind mode of the exchequer, which regards things in the abstract, and knows no difference in the quality of its debts, or the circumstances of its debtors. By this means, it fatigues itself; it vexes others; it often crushes the poor; it lets escape the rich; or in a fit of mercy or carelessness, declines all means of recovering its just demands. Content with the eternity of its claims, it enjoys its epicurean divinity with epicurean langour. But it is proper that all sorts of accounts should be closed some time or other—by payment; by composition; or by oblivion. *Expedit reipublicæ ut sit finis litium.* Constantly taking along with me, that an extreme rigour is sure to arm every thing against it, and at length to relax into a supine neglect, I propose, Sir, that even the best, soundest, and the most recent debts, should be put into instalments, for the mutual benefit of the accountant and the public.

In proportion, however, as I am tender of the past, I would be provident of the future. All money that was formerly impressed to the two great *pay-offices*, I would have impressed in future to the *bank of England*. These offices should in future, receive no more than cash sufficient for small payments. Their other payments ought to be made by draughts on the bank expressing the service. A checque account from both offices, of drafts and receipts, should be annually made up in the exchequer, charging the bank in the account, with the cash-balance, but not demanding the payment until there is an order from the treasury, in consequence of a vote of parliament.

As I did not, Sir, deny to the paymaster the natural profits of the bank that was in his hands, so neither would I to the bank of England. A share of that profit might be derived to the public in various ways. My favourite mode is this; that, in compensation for the use of this money, the bank may take upon themselves, first *the charge of the mint*; to which they are already, by their charter, obliged to bring in a great deal of bullion annually to be coined.

In the next place, I mean that they should take upon themselves the charge of *remittances to our troops abroad*. This is a species of dealing from which, by the same charter, they are not debarred. One and a quarter *per cent.* will be saved instantly thereby to the public, on very large sums of money. This will be at once a matter of œconomy, and a considerable reduction of influence, by taking away a private contract of an expensive nature. If

the bank, which is a great corporation, and of course receives the least profits from the money in their custody, should of itself refuse, or be persuaded to refuse this offer upon those terms, I can speak with some confidence, that one at least, if not both parts of the condition would be received, and gratefully received, by several bankers of eminence. There is no banker who will not be at least as good security as any paymaster of the forces, or any treasurer of the navy, that have ever been bankers to the public: as rich at least as my Lord Chatham, or my Lord Holland, or either of the honourable gentlemen who now hold the offices, were at the time that they entered into them; or as ever the whole establishment of the *mint* has been at any period.

These, Sir, are the outlines of the plan I mean to follow, in suppressing these two large subordinate treasuries. I now come to another subordinate treasury; I mean, that of the *paymaster of the pensions;* for which purpose I re-enter the limits of the civil establishment—I departed from those limits in pursuit of a principle; and following the same game in its doubles, I am brought into those limits again. That treasury, and that office, I mean to take away; and to transfer the payment of every name, mode, and denomination of pensions, to the *exchequer.* The present course of diversifying the same object, can answer no good purpose; whatever its use may be to purposes of another kind. There are also other lists of pensions; and I mean that they should all be hereafter paid at one and the same place. The whole of the new consolidated list I mean to reduce to 60,000*l.* a year, which sum I intend it shall never exceed. I think that sum will fully answer as a reward for all real merit, and a provision for all real public charity that is ever like to be placed upon the list. If any merit of an extraordinary nature should emerge, before that reduction is completed, I have left it open for an address of either house of parliament to provide for the case. To all other demands, it must be answered, with regret, but with firmness, "the public is poor."

I do not propose, as I told you before Christmas, to take away any pension. I know, that the public seem to call for a reduction of such of them as shall appear unmerited. As a censorial act, and punishment of an abuse, it might answer some purpose. But this can make no part of *my* plan. I mean to proceed by bill; and I cannot stop for such an inquiry. I know some gentlemen may blame me. It is with great submission to better judgments that I recommend it to consideration; that a critical retrospective examination of the pension list, upon the principle of merit, can never serve for my basis.—It cannot answer, according to my plan, any effectual purpose of œconomy, or of future permanent reformation. The process in any way will be entangled and difficult; and it will be infinitely slow: there is a danger that if we turn our line of march, now directed towards the grand object, into this more laborious than useful detail of operations, we shall never arrive at our end.

The king, Sir, has been by the constitution appointed sole judge of the merit for which a pension is to be given. We have a right, undoubtedly, to canvass this, as we have to canvass every act of government. But there is a material difference between an office to be reformed, and a pension taken away for demerit. In the former case, no charge is implied against the holder; in the latter, his character is slurred, as well as his lawful emolument affected. The former process is against the thing; the second against the person. The pensioner certainly, if he pleases, has a right to stand on his own defence; to plead his possession; and to bottom his title in the competency of the crown to give him what he holds. Possessed, and on the defensive as he is, he will not be obliged to prove his special merit, in order to justify the act of legal discretion, now turned into his property, according to his tenure. The very act, he will contend, is a legal presumption, and an implication of his merit. If this be so, from the natural force of all legal presumption, he would put us to the difficult proof, that he has no merit at all. But other questions would arise in the course of such an inquiry; that is, questions of the merit when weighed against the proportion of the reward; then the difficulty will be much greater.

The difficulty will not, Sir, I am afraid, be much less, if we pass to the person really guilty, in the question of an unmerited pension; the minister himself. I admit that when called to account for the execution of a trust, he might fairly be obliged to prove the affirmative; and to state the merit for which the pension is given; though on the pensioner himself, such a process would be hard. If in this examination we proceed methodically, and so as to avoid all suspicion of partiality and prejudice, we must take the pensions in order of time, or merely alphabetically. The very first pension to which we come in either of these ways, may appear the most grossly unmerited of any. But the minister may very possibly shew, that he knows nothing of the putting on this pension—that it

was prior in time to his administration—that the minister who laid it on is dead; and then we are thrown back upon the pensioner himself, and plunged into all our former difficulties. Abuses, and gross ones, I doubt not, would appear; and to the correction of which I would readily give my hand; but, when I consider that pensions have not generally been affected by the revolutions of ministry; as I know not where such inquiries would stop, and as an absence of merit is a negative and loose thing, one might be led to derange the order of families, founded on the probable continuance of their kind of income. I might hurt children; I might injure creditors. I really think it the more prudent course, not to follow the letter of the petitions. If we fix this mode of inquiry as a basis, we shall, I fear, end, as parliament has often ended under similar circumstances. There will be great delay; much confusion; much inequality in our proceedings. But what presses me most of all is this; that though we should strike off all the unmerited pensions, while the power of the crown remains unlimited, the very same undeserving persons might afterwards return to the very same list: or if they did not, other persons meriting as little as they do, might be put upon it to an undefinable amount. This I think is the pinch of the grievance.

For these reasons, Sir, I am obliged to wave this mode of proceeding as any part of my plan. In a plan of reformation, it would be one of my maxims, that when I know of an establishment, which may be subservient to useful purposes, and which, at the same time, from its discretionary nature, is liable to a very great perversion from those purposes, *I would limit the quantity of the power that might be so abused.* For I am sure, that in all such cases, the rewards of merit will have very narrow bounds; and that partial or corrupt favour will be infinite. This principle is not arbitrary; but the limitation of the specific quantity must be so in some measure. I therefore state 60,000*l.* leaving it open to the house to enlarge or contract the sum as they shall see, on examination, that the discretion I use is scanty or liberal. The whole amount of the pensions of all denominations, which have been laid before us, amount, for a period of seven years, to considerably more than 100,000*l.* a year. To what the other lists amount, I know not. That will be seen hereafter. But from those that do appear, a saving will accrue to the public, at one time or other, of 40,000*l.* a year, and we had better in my opinion to let it fall in naturally, than to tear it crude and unripe from the stalk.*

There is a great deal of uneasiness among the people, upon an article which I must class under the head of pensions. I mean the *great patent offices in the exchequer.* They are in reality and substance no other than pensions, and in no other light shall I consider them. They are sinecures. They are always executed by deputy. The duty of the principal is as nothing. They differ however from the pensions on the list, in some particulars. They are held for life. I think, with the public, that the profits of those places are grown enormous; the magnitude of those profits, and the nature of them, both call for reformation. The nature of their profits, which grow out of the public distress, is itself invidious and grievous. But I fear that reform cannot be immediate. I find myself under a restriction. These places, and others of the same kind, which are held for life, have been considered as property. They have been given as a provision for children; they have been the subject of family settlements; they have been the security of creditors. What the law respects shall be sacred to me. If the barriers of law should be broken down, upon ideas of convenience, even of public convenience, we shall have no longer any thing certain among us. If the discretion of power is once let loose upon property, we can be at no loss to determine whose power, and what discretion it is that will prevail at last. It would be wise to attend upon the order of things; and not to attempt to outrun the slow, but smooth and even course of nature. There are occasions, I admit, of public necessity, so vast, so clear, so evident, that they supersede all laws. Law being only made for the benefit of the community, cannot in any one of its parts resist a demand which may comprehend the total of the public interest. To be sure, no law can set itself up against the cause and reason of all law. But such a case very rarely happens; and this most certainly is not such a case. The mere time of the reform is by no means worth the sacrifice of a principle of law. Individuals

* It was supposed by the lord advocate, in a subsequent debate, that Mr. Burke, because he objected to an inquiry into the pension list for the purpose of œconomy and relief of the public, would have it withheld from the judgment of parliament for all purposes whatsoever. This learned gentleman certainly misunderstood him. His plan shews that he wished the whole list to be easily accessible; and he knows that the public eye is of itself a great guard against abuse.

pass like shadows; but the commonwealth is fixed and stable. The difference, therefore, of to-day and to-morrow, which to private people is immense, to the state is nothing. At any rate, it is better, if possible, to reconcile our œconomy with our laws, than to set them at variance; a quarrel which in the end must be destructive to both.

My idea, therefore, is, to reduce those officers to fixed salaries, as the present lives and reversions shall successively fall. I mean, that the office of the great auditor (the auditor of the receipt) shall be reduced to 3,000*l.* a year; and the auditors of the imprest, and the rest of the principal officers, to fixed appointments of 1,500*l.* a year each. It will not be difficult to calculate the value of this fall of lives to the public, when we shall have obtained a just account of the present income of those places; and we shall obtain that account with great facility, if the present possessors are not alarmed with any apprehension of danger to their freehold office.

I know too, that it will be demanded of me, how it comes, that since I admit these offices to be no better than pensions, I chose, after the principle of law had been satisfied, to retain them at all? To this, Sir, I answer, that conceiving it to be a fundamental part of the constitution of this country, and of the reason of state in every country, that there must be means of rewarding public service, those means will be incomplete, and indeed wholly insufficient for that purpose, if there should be no further reward for that service, than the daily wages it receives during the pleasure of the crown.

Whoever seriously considers the excellent argument of Lord Somers, in the banker's case, will see he bottoms himself upon the very same maxim which I do; and one of his principal grounds of doctrine for the alienability of the domain in England,* contrary to the maxim of the law in France, he lays in the constitutional policy of furnishing a permanent reward to public service; of making that reward the origin of families; and the foundation of wealth as well as of honours. It is indeed the only genuine unadulterated origin of nobility. It is a great principle in government; a principle at the very foundation of the whole structure. The other judges who held the same doctrine, went beyond Lord Somers with regard to the remedy, which they thought was given by law against the crown, upon the grant of pensions.

* Before the statute of queen Anne, which limited the alienation of land.

Indeed no man knows, when he cuts off the incitements to a virtuous ambition, and the just rewards of public service, what infinite mischief he may do his country, through all generations. Such saving to the public may prove the worst mode of robbing it. The crown, which has in its hands the trust of the daily pay for national service, ought to have in its hands also the means for the repose of public labour, and the fixed settlement of acknowledged merit. There is a time, when the weather-beaten vessels of the state ought to come into harbour. They must at length have a retreat from the malice of rivals, from the perfidy of political friends, and the inconstancy of the people. Many of the persons, who in all times have filled the great offices of state, have been younger brothers, who had originally little, if any fortune. These offices do not furnish the means of amassing wealth. There ought to be some power in the crown of granting pensions out of the reach of its own caprices. An intail of dependence is a bad reward of merit.

I would, therefore, leave to the crown the possibility of conferring some favours, which, whilst they are received as a reward, do not operate as corruption. When men receive obligations from the crown, through the pious hands of fathers, or of connections as venerable as the paternal, the dependences which arise from thence, are the obligations of gratitude, and not the fetters of servility. Such ties originate in virtue, and they promote it. They continue men in those habitudes of friendship, those political connections, and those political principles in which they began life. They are antidotes against corrupt levity, instead of causes of it. What an unseemly spectacle would it afford, what a disgrace would it be to the commonwealth that suffered such things, to see the hopeful son of a meritorious minister begging his bread at the door of that treasury, from whence his father dispensed the œconomy of an empire, and promoted the happiness and glory of his country? Why should he be obliged to prostrate his honour, and to submit his principles at the levee of some proud favourite, shouldered and thrust aside by every impudent pretender, on the very spot where a few days before he saw himself adored?—obliged to cringe to the author of the calamities of his house, and to kiss the hands that are red with his father's blood?—No, Sir, these things are unfit—they are intolerable.

Sir, I shall be asked, why I do not choose to destroy those offices which are pensions, and appoint pensions under the direct title in

their stead? I allow that in some cases it leads to abuse; to have things appointed for one purpose, and applied to another. I have no great objection to such a change: but I do not think it quite prudent for me to propose it. If I should take away the present establishment, the burthen of proof rests upon me, that so many pensions, and no more, and to such an amount each, and no more, are necessary for the public service. This is what I can never prove; for it is a thing incapable of definition. I do not like to take away an object that I think answers my purpose, in hopes of getting it back again in a better shape. People will bear an old establishment when its excess is corrected, who will revolt at a new one. I do not think these office-pensions to be more in number than sufficient: but on that point the house will exercise its discretion. As to abuse, I am convinced that very few trusts in the ordinary course of administration have admitted less abuse than this. Efficient ministers have been their own paymasters. It is true. But their very partiality has operated as a kind of justice; and still it was service that was paid. When we look over this exchequer list, we find it filled with the descendants of the Walpoles, of the Pelhams, of the Townshends; names to whom this country owes its liberties; and to whom his majesty owes his crown. It was in one of these lines, that the immense and envied employment he now holds, came to a certain duke,* who is now probably sitting quietly at a very good dinner directly under us, and acting *high life below stairs*, whilst we, his masters, are filling our mouths with unsubstantial sounds, and talking of hungry œconomy over his head. But he is the elder branch of an ancient and decayed house, joined to, and repaired by the reward of services done by another. I respect the original title, and the first purchase of merited wealth and honour through all its descents, through all its transfers, and all its assignments. May such fountains never be dried up! May they ever flow with their original purity, and refresh and fructify the commonwealth, for ages!

Sir, I think myself bound to give you my reasons as clearly, and as fully, for stopping in the course of reformation, as for proceeding in it. My limits are the rules of law; the rules of policy; and the service of the state. This is the reason why I am not able to intermeddle with another article, which seems to be a specific object in several of the petitions; I mean the reduction of exorbitant emoluments to efficient offices. If I knew of any real efficient office, which did possess exorbitant emoluments, I should be extremely desirous of reducing them. Others may know of them. I do not. I am not possessed of an exact common measure between real service and its reward. I am very sure, that states do sometimes receive services, which is hardly in their power to reward according to their worth. If I were to give my judgment with regard to this country, I do not think the great efficient offices of the state to be overpaid. The service of the public is a thing which cannot be put to auction, and struck down to those who will agree to execute it the cheapest. When the proportion between reward and service is our object, we must always consider of what nature the service is, and what sort of men they are that must perform it. What is just payment for one kind of labour, and full encouragement for one kind of talents, is fraud and discouragement to others. Many of the great offices have much duty to do, and much expense of representation to maintain. A secretary of state, for instance, must not appear sordid in the eyes of the ministers of other nations; neither ought our ministers abroad to appear contemptible in the courts where they reside. In all offices of duty, there is, almost necessarily, a great neglect of all domestic affairs. A person in high office can rarely take a view of his family-house. If he sees that the state takes no detriment, the state must see that his affairs should take as little.

I will even go so far as to affirm, that if men were willing to serve in such situations without salary, they ought not to be permitted to do it. Ordinary service must be secured by the motives to ordinary integrity. I do not hesitate to say, that that state which lays its foundation in rare and heroic virtues, will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption. An honourable and fair profit is the best security against avarice and rapacity; as in all things else, a lawful and regulated enjoyment is the best security against debauchery and excess. For as wealth is power, so all power will infallibly draw wealth to itself by some means or other: and when men are left no way of ascertaining their profits but by their means of obtaining them, those means will be increased to infinity. This is true in all the parts of administration, as well as in the whole. If any individual were to decline his appointments, it might give an

* Duke of Newcastle, whose dining-room is under the house of commons.

unfair advantage to ostentatious ambition over unpretending service; it might breed invidious comparisons; it might tend to destroy whatever little unity and agreement may be found among ministers. And after all, when an ambitious man had run down his competitors by a fallacious show of disinterestedness, and fixed himself in power by that means, what security is there that he would not change his course, and claim as an indemnity ten times more than he has given up?

This rule, like every other, may admit its exceptions. When a great man has some one great object in view to be achieved in a given time, it may be absolutely necessary for him to walk out of all the common roads, and if his fortune permits it, to hold himself out as a splendid example. I am told, that something of this kind is now doing in a country near us. But this is for a short race; the training for a heat or two, and not the proper preparation for the regular stages of a methodical journey. I am speaking of establishments and not of men.

It may be expected, Sir, that when I am giving my reasons why I limit myself in the reduction of employments, or of their profits, I should say something of those which seem of eminent inutility in the state; I mean the number of officers who by their places are attendant on the person of the king. Considering the commonwealth merely as such, and considering those officers only as relative to the direct purposes of the state, I admit that they are of no use at all. But there are many things in the constitution of establishments, which appear of little value on the first view, which in a secondary and oblique manner, produce very material advantages. It was on full consideration that I determined not to lessen any of the offices of honour about the crown, in their number, or their emoluments. These emoluments, except in one or two cases, do not much more than answer the charge of attendance. Men of condition naturally love to be about a court; and women of condition love it much more. But there is in all regular attendance, so much of constraint, that if it were a mere charge, without any compensation, you would soon have the court deserted by all the nobility of the kingdom.

Sir, the most serious mischiefs would follow from such a desertion. Kings are naturally lovers of low company. They are so elevated above all the rest of mankind, that they must look upon all their subjects as on a level. They are rather apt to hate than to love their nobility, on account of the occasional resistance to their will, which will be made by their virtue, their petulance, or their pride. It must indeed be admitted, that many of the nobility are as perfectly willing to act the part of flatterers, tale-bearers, parasites, pimps, and buffoons, as any of the lowest and vilest of mankind can possibly be. But they are not properly qualified for this object of their ambition. The want of a regular education, and early habits, and some lurking remains of their dignity, will never permit them to become a match for an Italian eunuch, a mountebank, a fidler, a player, or any regular practitioner of that tribe. The Roman emperours almost from the beginning, threw themselves into such hands; and the mischief increased every day till the decline and final ruin of the empire. It is therefore of very great importance (provided the thing is not overdone) to contrive such an establishment as must, almost whether a prince will or not, bring into daily and hourly offices about his person, a great number of his first nobility; and it is rather an useful prejudice that gives them a pride in such a servitude. Though they are not much the better for a court, a court will be much the better for them. I have therefore not attempted to reform any of the offices of honour about the king's person.

There are, indeed, two offices in his stables which are sinecures. By the change of manners, and indeed by the nature of the thing, they must be so; I mean the several keepers of buck-hounds, stag-hounds, fox-hounds, and harriers. They answer no purpose of utility or of splendour. These I propose to abolish. It is not proper that great noblemen should be keepers of dogs, though they were the king's dogs. In every part of the scheme, I have endeavoured that no primary, and that even no secondary service of the state, should suffer by its frugality. I mean to touch no offices but such as I am perfectly sure are either of no use at all, or not of any use in the least assignable proportion to the burthen with which they load the revenues of the kingdom, and to the influence with which they oppress the freedom of parliamentary deliberation; for which reason there are but two offices which are properly state offices, that I have a desire to reform.

The first of them is the new office of *third secretary of state*, which is commonly called *secretary of state for the colonies*.

We know that all the correspondence of the colonies had been, until within a few years, carried on by the southern secretary of state; and that this department has not been shunned

upon account of the weight of its duties; but on the contrary, much sought, on account of its patronage. Indeed he must be poorly acquainted with the history of office, who does not know how very lightly the American functions have always leaned on the shoulders of the ministerial *Atlas*, who has upheld that side of the sphere. Undoubtedly, great temper and judgment was requisite in the management of the colony politics; but the official detail was a trifle. Since the new appointment, a train of unfortunate accidents has brought before us almost the whole correspondence of this favourite secretary's office, since the first day of its establishment. I will say nothing of its auspicious foundation; of the quality of its correspondence; or of the effects that have ensued from it. I speak merely of its *quantity;* which we know would have been little or no addition to the trouble of whatever office had its hands the fullest. But what has been the real condition of the old office of secretary of state? Have their velvet bags, and their red boxes, been so full, that nothing more could possibly be crammed into them?

A correspondence of a curious nature has been lately published.* In that correspondence, Sir, we find the opinion of a noble person, who is thought to be the grand manufacturer of administrations; and therefore the best judge of the quality of his work. He was of opinion, that there was but one man of diligence and industry in the whole administration—it was the late earl of Suffolk. The noble lord lamented very justly, that this statesman, of so much mental vigour, was almost wholly disabled from the exertion of it, by his bodily infirmities. Lord Suffolk, dead to the state, long before he was dead to nature, at last paid his tribute to the common treasury to which we must all be taxed. But so little want was found even of his intentional industry, that the office, vacant in reality to its duties long before, continued vacant even in nomination and appointment for a year after his death. The whole of the laborious and arduous correspondence of this empire, rested solely upon the activity and energy of Lord Weymouth.

It is therefore demonstrable, since one diligent man was fully equal to the duties of the two offices, that two diligent men will be equal to the duty of three. The business of the new office which I shall propose to you to suppress, is by no means too much to be returned to either of the secretaries which remain. If this dust in the balance should be thought too heavy, it may be divided between them both; North America (whether free or reduced) to the northern secretary, the West Indies to the southern. It is not necessary that I should say more upon the inutility of this office. It is burning day-light. But before I have done, I shall just remark, that the history of this office is too recent to suffer us to forget, that it was made for the mere convenience of the arrangements of political intrigue, and not for the service of the state; that it was made, in order to give a colour to an exorbitant increase of the civil list; and in the same act to bring a new accession to the loaded compost heap of currupt influence.

There is, Sir, another office which was not long since closely connected with this of the American secretary; but has been lately separated from it for the very same purpose for which it had been conjoined; I mean the sole purpose of all the separations and all the conjunctions that have been lately made—a job. —I speak, Sir, of the *board of trade and plantations*. This board is a sort of temperate bed of influence; a sort of gently ripening hothouse, where eight members of parliament receive salaries of a thousand a year, for a certain given time, in order to mature at a proper season, a claim to two thousand, granted for doing less, and on the credit of having toiled so long in that inferiour laborious department.

I have known that board, off and on, for a great number of years. Both of its pretended objects have been much the objects of my study, if I have a right to call any pursuits of mine by so respectable a name. I can assure the house, and I hope they will not think that I risk my little credit lightly, that, without meaning to convey the least reflection upon any one of its members past or present,—it is a board which, if not mischievous, is of no use at all.

You will be convinced, Sir, that I am not mistaken, if you reflect how generally it is true, that commerce, the principal object of that office, flourishes most when it is left to itself. Interest, the great guide of commerce, is not a blind one. It is very well able to find its own way; and its necessities are its best laws. But if it were possible, in the nature of things, that the young should direct the old, and the inexperienced instruct the knowing; if a board in the state was the best tutor for the counting-house; if the desk ought to read lectures to the anvil, and the pen to usurp the place of the shuttle—yet in any

* Letters between Dr. Addington and Sir James Wright.

matter of regulation, we know that board must act with as little authority as skill. The prerogative of the crown is utterly inadequate to the object; because all regulations are, in their nature, restrictive of some liberty. In the reign, indeed, of *Charles the First*, the council, or committees of council, were never a moment unoccupied, with affairs of trade. But even where they had no ill intention (which was sometimes the case) trade and manufacture suffered infinitely from their injudicious tamperings. But since that period, whenever regulation is wanting (for I do not deny, that sometimes it may be wanting) parliament constantly sits; and parliament alone is competent to such regulation. We want no instructions from boards of trade, or from any other board; and God forbid we should give the least attention to their reports. Parliamentary inquiry is the only mode of obtaining parliamentary information. There is more real knowledge to be obtained, by attending the detail of business in the committees above stairs, than ever did come, or ever will come from any board in this kingdom, or from all of them together. An assiduous member of parliament will not be the worse instructed there, for not being paid a thousand a year for learning his lesson. And now that I speak of the committees above stairs, I must say, that having till lately attended them a good deal, I have observed that no description of members give so little attendance, either to communicate, or to obtain instruction upon matters of commerce, as the honourable members of the grave board of trade. I really do not recollect that I have ever seen one of them in that sort of business. Possibly some members may have better memories; and may call to mind some job that may have accidentally brought one or other of them, at one time or other, to attend a matter of commerce.

This board, Sir, has had both its original formation, and its regeneration, in a job. In a job it was conceived, and in a job its mother brought it forth. It made one among those showy and specious impositions, which one of the experiment-making administrations of *Charles the Second* held out to delude the people, and to be substituted in the place of the real service which they might expect from a parliament annually sitting. It was intended, also to corrupt that body whenever it should be permitted to sit. It was projected in the year 1668, and it continued in a tottering and rickety childhood for about three or four years, for it died in the year 1673, a babe of as little hopes as ever swelled the bills of mortality in the article of convulsed or over-laid children, who have hardly stepped over the threshold of life.

It was buried with little ceremony; and never more thought of, until the reign of *King William*, when in the strange vicissitude of neglect and vigour, of good and ill success that attended his wars, in the year 1695, the trade was distressed beyond all example of former sufferings, by the piracies of the French cruisers. This suffering incensed, and, as it should seem, very justly incensed, the house of commons. In this ferment they struck, not only at the administration, but at the very constitution of the executive government. They attempted to form in parliament a board for the protection of trade; which, as they planned it, was to draw to itself a great part, if not the whole, of the functions and powers, both of the admiralty, and of the treasury; and thus, by a parliamentary delegation of office and officers, they threatened absolutely to separate these departments from the whole system of the executive government, and of course to vest the most leading and essential of its attributes in this board. As the executive government was in a manner convicted of a dereliction of its functions, it was with infinite difficulty, that this blow was warded off in that session. There was a threat to renew the same in the next. To prevent the effect of this manœuvre, the court opposed another manœuvre to it; and in the year 1696, called into life this board of trade, which had slept since 1673.

This, in a few words, is the history of the regeneration of the board of trade. It has perfectly answered its purposes. It was intended to quiet the minds of the people, and to compose the ferment that was then strongly working in parliament. The courtiers were too happy to be able to substitute a board, which they knew would be useless, in the place of one that they feared would be dangerous. Thus the board of trade was reproduced in a job; and perhaps it is the only instance of a public body, which has never degenerated; but to this hour preserves all the health and vigour of its primitive institution.

This board of trade and plantations has not been of any use to the colonies, as colonies; so little of use, that the flourishing settlements of New England, of Virginia, and of Maryland, and all our wealthy colonies in the West Indies, were of a date prior to the first board of Charles the Second. Pennsylvania and Carolina were settled during its dark quarter, in the interval between the extinction of the

first, and the formation of the second board. Two colonies alone owe their origin to that board. Georgia, which, till lately, has made a very slow progress; and never did make any progress at all, until it wholly got rid of all the regulations which the board of trade had moulded into its original constitution. That colony has cost the nation very great sums of money; whereas the colonies which have had the fortune of not being godfathered by the board of trade never cost the nation a shilling, except what has been so properly spent in losing them. But the colony of Georgia, weak as it was, carried with it to the last hour, and carries, even in its present dead pallid visage, the perfect resemblance of its parents. It always had, and it now has, an *establishment* paid by the public of England, for the sake of the influence of the crown; that colony having never been able or willing to take upon itself the expense of its proper government, or its own appropriated jobs.

The province of Nova Scotia was the youngest and the favourite child of the board. Good God! What sums the nursing of that ill-thriven, hard-visaged, and ill-favoured brat, has cost to this wittol nation! Sir, this colony has stood us in a sum of not less than seven hundred thousand pounds. To this day it has made no repayment—It does not even support those offices of expense, which are miscalled its government; the whole of that job still lies upon the patient, callous shoulders of the people of England.

Sir, I am going to state a fact to you, that will serve to set in full sunshine the real value of formality and official superintendance. There was in the province of Nova Scotia, one little neglected corner, the country of the *neutral French*; which having the good fortune to escape the fostering care of both France and England, and to have been shut out from the protection and regulation of councils of commerce, and of boards of trade, did, in silence, without notice, and without assistance, increase to a considerable degree. But it seems our nation had more skill and ability in destroying, than in settling a colony. In the last war we did, in my opinion, most inhumanly, and upon pretences that in the eye of an honest man are not worth a farthing, root out this poor innocent deserving people, whom our utter inability to govern, or to reconcile, gave us no sort of right to extirpate. Whatever the merits of that extirpation might have been, it was on the footsteps of a neglected people, it was on the fund of unconstrained poverty, it was on the acquisitions of unregulated industry, that any thing which deserves the name of a colony in that province, has been formed. It has been formed by overflowings from the exuberant population of New England, and by emigration from other parts of Nova Scotia of fugitives from the protection of the board of trade.

But if all of these things were not more than sufficient to prove to you the inutility of that expensive establishment, I will desire you to recollect, Sir, that those who may be very ready to defend it, are very cautious how they employ it; cautious how they employ it even in appearance and pretence. They are afraid they should lose the benefit of its influence in parliament, if they seemed to keep it up for any other purpose. If ever there were commercial points of great weight, and most closely connected with our dependencies, they are those which have been agitated and decided in parliament since I came into it. Which of the innumerable regulations since made had their origin or their improvement in the board of trade? Did any of the several East India bills which have been successively produced since 1767, originate there? Did any one dream of referring them, or any part of them thither? Was any body so ridiculous as even to think of it? If ever there was an occasion on which the board was fit to be consulted, it was with regard to the acts that were preludes to the American war, or attendant on its commencement: those acts were full of commercial regulations, such as they were—the intercourse bill; the prohibitory bill; the fishery bill. If the board was not concerned in such things, in what particular was it thought fit that it should be concerned? In the course of all these bills through the house, I observed the members of that board to be remarkably cautious of intermeddling. They understood decorum better; they know that matters of trade and plantations are no business of theirs.

There were two very recent occasions, which, if the idea of any use for the board had not been extinguished by prescription, appeared loudly to call for their interference.

When commissioners were sent to pay his majesty's and our dutiful respects to the congress of the United States, a part of their powers under the commission were, it seems, of a commercial nature. They were authorized in the most ample and undefined manner, to form a commercial treaty with America on the spot. This was no trivial object. As the formation of such a treaty would necessarily have been no less than the breaking up

of our whole commercial system, and the giving it an entire new form; one would imagine, that the board of trade would have sat day and night, to model propositions, which, on our side, might serve as a basis to that treaty. No such thing. Their learned leisure was not in the least interrupted, though one of the members of the board was a commissioner, and might, in mere compliment to his office, have been supposed to make a show of deliberation on the subject. But he knew that his colleagues would have thought he laughed in their faces, had he attempted to bring any thing the most distantly relating to commerce or colonies before *them*. A noble person, engaged in the same commission, and sent to learn his commercial rudiments in New York, (then under the operation of an act for the universal prohibition of trade,) was soon after put at the head of that board. This contempt from the present ministers of all the pretended functions of that board, and their manner of breathing into its very soul, of inspiring it with its animating and presiding principle, puts an end to all disputes concerning their opinion of the clay it was made of. But I will give them heaped measure.

It was but the other day, that the noble lord in the blue riband carried up to the house of peers, two acts, altering I think much for the better, but altering in a great degree, our whole commercial system. Those acts, I mean, for giving a free trade to Ireland in woollens and in all things else, with independent nations, and giving them an equal trade to our own colonies. Here too the novelty of this great, but arduous and critical improvement of system, would make you conceive that the anxious solicitude of the noble lord in the blue riband, would have wholly destroyed the plan of summer recreation of that board, by references to examine, compare, and digest matters for parliament—You would imagine, that Irish commissioners of customs, and English commissioners of customs, and commissioners of excise, that merchants and manufacturers of every denomination, had daily crowded their outer rooms. *Nil horum.* The perpetual virtual adjournment, and the unbroken sitting vacation of that board, was no more disturbed by the Irish than by the plantation commerce, or any other commerce. The same matter made a large part of the business which occupied the house for two sessions before; and as our ministers were not then mellowed by the mild, emollient, and engaging blandishments of our dear sister, into all the tenderness of unqualified surrender, the bounds and limits of a restrained benefit naturally required much detailed management and positive regulation. But neither the qualified propositions which were received, nor those other qualified propositions which were rejected by ministers, were the least concern of theirs, or were they ever thought of in the business.

It is therefore, Sir, on the opinion of parliament, on the opinion of the ministers, and even on their own opinion of their inutility, that I shall propose to you to *suppress the board of trade and plantations;* and to recommit all its business to the council from whence it was very improvidently taken; and which business, (whatever it might be,) was much better done, and without any expense; and indeed where in effect it may all come at last. Almost all that deserves the name of business there, is the reference of the plantation acts to the opinion of gentlemen of the law. But all this may be done, as the Irish business of the same nature has always been done, by the council, and with a reference to the attorney and solicitor general.

There are some regulations in the household, relative to the officers of the yeomen of the guards, and the officers and band of gentlemen pensioners, which I shall likewise submit to your consideration, for the purpose of regulating establishments, which at present are much abused.

I have now finished all, that for the present I shall trouble you with on the *plan of reduction.* I mean next to propose to you the *plan of arrangement*, by which I mean to appropriate and fix the civil list money to its several services according to their nature; for I am thoroughly sensible, that if a discretion, wholly arbitrary can be exercised over the civil list revenue, although the most effectual methods may be taken to prevent the inferiour departments from exceeding their bounds, the plan of reformation will still be left very imperfect. It will not, in my opinion, be safe to permit an entirely arbitrary discretion even in the first lord of the treasury himself; it will not be safe to leave with him a power of diverting the public money from its proper objects, of paying it in an irregular course, or of inverting perhaps the order of time, dictated by the proportion of value, which ought to regulate his application of payment to service.

I am sensible too, that the very operation of a plan of œconomy which tends to exonerate the civil list of expensive establishments, may in some sort defeat the capital end we have in view, the independence of parliament;

and that in removing the public and ostensible means of influence, we may increase the fund of private corruption. I have thought of some methods to prevent an abuse of surplus cash under discretionary application; I mean the heads of *secret service*, *special service*, *various payments*, and the like; which I hope, will answer, and which in due time I shall lay before you. Where I am unable to limit the quantity of the sums to be applied, by reason of the uncertain quantity of the service, I endeavour to confine it to its *line*; to secure an indefinite application to the definite service to which it belongs; not to stop the progress of expense in its line, but to confine it to that line in which it professes to move.

But that part of my plan, Sir, upon which I principally rest, that, on which I rely for the purpose of binding up and securing the whole, is to establish a fixed and invariable order in all its payments, which it shall not be permitted to the first lord of the treasury, upon any pretence whatsoever, to depart from. I therefore divide the civil list payment into *nine* classes, putting each class forward according to the importance or justice of the demand, and to the inability of the persons entitled to enforce their pretensions; that is, to put those first who have the most efficient offices, or claim the justest debts; and, at the same time, from the character of that description of men, from the retiredness or the remoteness of their situation, or from their want of weight and power to enforce their pretensions, or from their being entirely subject to the power of a minister, without any reciprocal power of awing, ought to be the most considered, and are the most likely to be neglected; all these I place in the highest classes: I place in the lowest those whose functions are of the least importance, but whose persons or rank are often of the greatest power and influence.

In the first class I place the *judges*, as of the first importance. It is the public justice that holds the community together; the ease, therefore, and independence of the judges, ought to supersede all other considerations, and they ought to be the very last to feel the necessities of the state, or to be obliged either to court or bully a minister for their right: they ought to be as *weak solicitors on their own demands*, as strenuous asserters of the rights and liberties of others. The judges are, or ought to be, of a *reserved* and retired character, and wholly unconnected with the political world.

In the second class, I place the foreign ministers. The judges are the links of our connections with one another; the foreign ministers are the links of our connection with other nations. They are not upon the spot to demand payment, and are therefore the most likely to be, as in fact they have sometimes been, entirely neglected, to the great disgrace, and perhaps the great detriment of the nation.

In the third class, I would bring all the tradesmen who supply the crown by contract, or otherwise.

In the fourth class, I place all the domestic servants of the king, and all persons in efficient offices, whose salaries do not exceed two hundred pounds a year.

In the fifth, upon account of honour, which ought to give place to nothing but charity and rigid justice, I would place the pensions and allowances of his majesty's royal family, comprehending of course the queen, together with the stated allowance of the privy purse.

In the sixth class, I place those efficient offices of duty, whose salaries may exceed the sum of two hundred pounds a year.

In the seventh class, that mixed mass the whole pension list.

In the eighth, the offices of honour about the king.

In the ninth, and the last of all, the salaries and pensions of the first lord of the treasury himself, the chancellor of the exchequer, and the other commissioners of the treasury.

If by any possible mismanagement of that part of the revenue which is left at discretion, or by any other mode of prodigality, cash should be deficient for the payment of the lowest classes, I propose, that the amount of those salaries where the deficiency may happen to fall, shall not be caried as debt to the account of the succeeding year, but that it shall be entirely lapsed, sunk and lost; so that government will be enabled to start in the race of every new year, wholly unloaded, fresh in wind and in vigour. Hereafter no civil list debt can ever come upon the public. And those who do not consider this as saving, because it is not a certain sum, do not ground their calculations of the future on their experience of the past.

I know of no mode of preserving the effectual execution of any duty, but to make it the direct interest of the executive officer that it shall be faithfully performed. Assuming, then, that the present vast allowance to the civil list is perfectly adequate to all its purposes, if there should be any failure, it must be from the mismanagement or neglect of the first commissioner of the treasury; since, upon the proposed plan, there can be no expense of any consequence, which he is not himself previously to authorize and finally to controul. It is

therefore just, as well as politic, that the loss should attach upon the delinquency.

If the failure from the delinquency should be very considerable, it will fall on the class directly above the first lord of the treasury, as well as upon himself and his board. It will fall, as it ought to fall, upon offices of no primary importance in the state; but then it will fall upon persons, whom it will be a matter of no slight importance for a minister to provoke—it will fall upon persons of the first rank and consequence in the kingdom; upon those who are nearest to the king, and frequently have a more interiour credit with him than the minister himself. It will fall upon masters of the horse, upon lord chamberlains, upon lord stewards, upon grooms of the stole, and lords of the bed-chamber. The household troops form an army, who will be ready to mutiny for want of pay, and whose mutiny will be *really* dreadful to a commander in chief. A rebellion of the thirteen lords of the bed-chamber would be far more terrible to a minister, and would probably affect his power more to the quick, than a revolt of thirteen colonies. What an uproar such an event would create at court! What *petitions*, and *committees*, and *associations*, would it not produce! Bless me! what a clattering of white sticks and yellow sticks would be about his head—what a storm of gold keys would fly about the ears of the minister—what a shower of Georges, and Thistles, and medals, and collars of S.S. would assail him at his first entrance into the antichamber, after an insolvent Christmas quarter. A tumult which could not be appeased by all the harmony of the new year's ode. Rebellion it is certain there would be; and rebellion may not now indeed be so critical an event to those who engage in it, since its price is so correctly ascertained at just a thousand pound.

Sir, this classing, in my opinion, is a serious and solid security for the performance of a minister's duty. Lord Coke says, that the staff was put into the treasurer's hand to enable him to support himself when there was no money in the exchequer, and to beat away importunate solicitors. The method, which I propose, would hinder him from the necessity of such a broken staff to lean on, or such a miserable weapon for repulsing the demands of worthless suitors, who, the noble lord in the blue riband knows, will bear many hard blows on the head, and many other indignities, before they are driven from the treasury. In this plan, he is furnished with an answer to all their importunity; an answer far more conclusive, than if he had knocked them down with his staff—"Sir, (or my Lord,) you are calling for my own salary—Sir, you are calling for the appointments of my colleagues who sit about me in office—Sir, you are going to excite a mutiny at court against me—you are going to estrange his majesty's confidence from me, through the chamberlain, or the master of the horse, or the groom of the stole."

As things now stand, every man in proportion to his consequence at court, tends to add to the expense of the civil list, by all manner of jobs, if not for himself, yet for his dependents. When the new plan is established, those who are now suitors for jobs, will become the most strenuous opposers of them. They will have a common interest with the minister in public œconomy. Every class, as it stands low, will become security for the payment of the preceding class; and thus the persons whose insignificant services defraud those that are useful, would then become interested in their payment. Then the powerful, instead of oppressing would be obliged to support the weak; and idleness would become concerned in the reward of industry. The whole fabric of the civil œconomy would become compact and connected in all its parts; it would be formed into a well-organized body, where every member contributes to the support of the whole: and where even the lazy stomach secures the vigour of the active arm.

This plan, I really flatter myself, is laid, not in official formality, nor in airy speculation, but in real life, and in human nature, in what "comes home (as Bacon says) to the business and bosoms of men." You have now, Sir, before you, the whole of my scheme, as far as I have digested it into a form, that might be in any respect worthy of your consideration.—I intend to lay it before you in five bills.* The plan consists, indeed, of many parts, but they stand upon a few plain principles. It is a plan which takes nothing from the civil list without discharging it of a burthen equal to the sum carried to the public service. It weakens no one function necessary to government; but on the contrary, by appropriating supply to service, it gives it greater vigour. It provides the means of order and foresight to a minister of finance, which may always keep all the objects of his office, and their state, condition, and relations, distinctly before him. It brings forward accounts without hurrying and distressing the accountants; whilst it provides for public

* Titles of the bills read.

convenience, it regards private rights. It extinguishes secret corruption almost to the possibility of its existence. It destroys direct and visible influence equal to the offices of at least fifty members of parliament. Lastly, it prevents the provision for his majesty's children, from being diverted to the political purposes of his minister.

These are the points, on which I rely for the merit of the plan: I pursue œconomy in a secondary view, and only as it is connected with these great objects. I am persuaded, that even for supply this scheme will be far from unfruitful, if it be executed to the extent I propose it. I think it will give to the public, at its periods, two or three hundred thousand pounds a year; if not, it will give them a system of œconomy, which is itself a great revenue. It gives me no little pride and satisfaction, to find that the principles of my proceedings are, in many respects, the very same with those which are now pursued in the plans of the French minister of finance. I am sure, that I lay before you a scheme easy and practicable in all its parts. I know it is common at once to applaud and to reject all attempts of this nature. I know it is common for men to say, that such and such things are perfectly right—very desirable; but that, unfortunately, they are not practicable. Oh! no, Sir, no. Those things which are not practicable, are not desirable. There is nothing in the world really beneficial, that does not lie within the reach of an informed understanding, and a well-directed pursuit. There is nothing that God has judged good for us, that he has not given us the means to accomplish, both in the natural and the moral world. If we cry, like children for the moon, like children we must cry on.

We must follow the nature of our affairs, and conform ourselves to our situation. If we do, our objects are plain and compassable. Why should we resolve to do nothing, because what I propose to you may not be the exact demand of the petition; when we are far from resolved to comply even with what evidently is so? Does this sort of chicanery become us? The people are the masters. They have only to express their wants at large and in gross. We are the expert artists; we are the skilful workmen, to shape their desires into perfect form, and to fit the utensil to the use. They are the sufferers, they tell the symptoms of the complaint; but we know the exact seat of the disease, and how to apply the remedy according to the rules of art. How shocking would it be to see us pervert our skill, into a sinister and servile dexterity, for the purpose of evading our duty, and defrauding our employers, who are our natural lords, of the object of their just expectations. I think the whole not only practicable, but practicable in a very short time. If we are in earnest about it, and if we exert that industry, and those talents in forwarding the work, which I am afraid may be exerted in impeding it—I engage, that the whole may be put in complete execution within a year. For my own part, I have very little to recommend me for this or for any task, but a kind of earnest and anxious perseverance of mind, which, with all its good and all its evil effects, is moulded into my constitution. I faithfully engage to the house, if they choose to appoint me to any part in the execution of this work, which (when they have made it theirs by the improvements of their wisdom, will be worthy of the able assistance they may give me) that by night and by day, in town, or in country, at the desk, or in the forest, I will, without regard to convenience, ease, or pleasure, devote myself to their service, not expecting or admitting any reward whatsoever. I owe to this country my labour, which is my all; and I owe to it ten times more industry, if ten times more I could exert. After all I shall be an unprofitable servant.

At the same time, if I am able, and if I shall be permitted, I will lend an humble helping hand to any other good work which is going on. I have not, Sir, the frantic presumption to suppose, that this plan contains in it the whole of what the public has a right to expect, in the great work of reformation they call for. Indeed it falls infinitely short of it. It falls short, even of my own ideas. I have some thoughts not yet fully ripened, relative to a reform in the customs and excise, as well as in some other branches of financial administration. There are other things too, which form essential parts in a great plan for the purpose of restoring the independence of parliament. The contractor's bill of last year it is fit to revive; and I rejoice that it is in better hands than mine. The bill for suspending the votes of custom-house officers, brought into parliament several years ago, by one of our worthiest and wisest members,* (would to God we could along with the plan revive the person who designed it.) But a man of very real integrity, honour, and ability will be found to take his place, and to carry his idea into

* W. Dowdeswell, Esq. chancellor of the exchequer, 1765.

full execution. You all see how necessary it is to review our military expenses for some years past, and, if possible, to bind up and close that bleeding artery of profusion: but that business also, I have reason to hope, will be undertaken by abilities that are fully adequate to it. Something must be devised (if possible) to check the ruinous expense of elections.

Sir, all or most of these things must be done. Every one must take his part.

If we should be able by dexterity or power or intrigue, to disappoint the expectations of our constituents, what will it avail us? We shall never be strong or artful enough to parry, or to put by the irresistible demands of our situation. That situation calls upon us, and upon our constituents too, with a voice which *will* be heard. I am sure no man is more zealously attached than I am to the privileges of this house, particularly in regard to the exclusive management of money. The lords have no right to the disposition, in any sense, of the public purse; but they have gone further in self-denial* than our utmost jealousy could have required. A power of examining accounts, to censure, correct, and punish, we never, that I know of, have thought of denying to the house of lords. It is something more than a century since we voted that body useless; they have now voted themselves so. The whole hope of reformation is at length cast upon *us*; and let us not deceive the nation, which does us the honour to hope every thing from our virtue. If *all* the nation are not equally forward to press this duty upon us yet be assured, that they will equally expect we should perform it. The respectful silence of those who wait upon your pleasure, ought to be as powerful with you, as the call of those who require your service as their right. Some, without doors, affect to feel hurt for your dignity, because they suppose that menaces are held out to you. Justify their good opinion, by shewing that no menaces are necessary to stimulate you to your duty.—But, Sir, whilst we may sympathise with them, in one point, who sympathise with us in another, we ought to attend no less to those who approach us like men, and who, in the guise of petitioners, speak to us in the tone of a concealed authority. It is not wise to force them to speak out more plainly, what they plainly mean.—But the petitioners are violent. Be it so. Those who are least anxious about your conduct, are not those that love you most. Moderate affection, and satiated enjoyment, are cold and respectful; but an ardent and injured passion is tempered up with wrath, and grief and shame, and conscious worth, and the maddening sense of violated right. A jealous love lights his torch from the firebrands of the furies.—They who call upon you to belong *wholly* to the people, are those who wish you to return to your *proper* home; to the sphere of your duty, to the post of your honour, to the mansion-house of all genuine, serene, and solid satisfaction. We have furnished to the people of England (indeed we have) some real cause of jealousy. Let us leave that sort of company which, if it does not destroy our innocence, pollutes our honour: let us free ourselves at once from every thing that can increase their suspicions, and inflame their just resentment: let us cast away from us, with a generous scorn, all the love-tokens, and symbols that we have been vain and light enough to accept;—all the bracelets, and snuff-boxes, and miniature pictures, and hair devices, and all the other adulterous trinkets that are the pledges of our alienation, and the monuments of our shame. Let us return to our legitimate home, and all jars and all quarrels will be lost in embraces. Let the commons in parliament assembled, be one and the same thing with the commons at large. The distinctions that are made to separate us, are unnatural and wicked contrivances. Let us identify, let us incorporate ourselves with the people. Let us cut all the cables and snap the chains which tie us to an unfaithful shore, and enter the friendly harbour, that shoots far out into the main its moles and jettees to receive us.—"War with the world, and peace with our constituents." Be this our motto, and our principle. Then indeed, we shall be truly great. Respecting ourselves we shall be respected by the world. At present all is troubled and cloudy, and distracted, and full of anger and turbulence, both abroad and at home; but the air may be cleared by this storm, and light and fertility may follow it. Let us give a faithful pledge to the people that we honour, indeed, the crown; but that we *belong* to them; that we are their auxiliaries, and not their task-masters; the fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, not lording over their rights, but helpers of their joy: that to tax them is a grievance to ourselves, but to cut off from our enjoyments to forward theirs, is the highest gratification we are capable of receiving. I feel with comfort, that we are all warmed with these sentiments, and while we

* Rejection of Lord Shelburne's motion in the house of lords.

are thus warm, I wish we may go directly and with a cheerful heart to this salutary work.

Sir, I move for leave to bring in a bill, "For the better regulation of his majesty's civil establishments, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of pensions, and the suppression of sundry useless, expensive, and inconvenient places; and for applying the monies saved thereby to the public service."*

Lord North stated, that there was a difference between this bill for regulating the establishments, and some of the others, as they affected the ancient patrimony of the crown; and therefore wished them to be postponed, till the king's consent could be obtained. This distinction was strongly controverted; but when it was insisted on as a point of decorum *only*, it was agreed to postpone them to another day. Accordingly, on the Monday following, viz. February 14, leave was given, on the motion of Mr. Burke, without opposition, to bring in

1st. "A bill for the sale of the forest and other crown lands, rents, and hereditaments, with certain exceptions; *and for applying the produce thereof to the public service*; and for securing, ascertaining, and satisfying, *tenant-rights*, and common and other rights."

2d. "A bill for the more perfectly uniting to the crown the principality of Wales, and the county palatine of Chester, and for the more commodious administration of justice within the same; as also for abolishing certain offices now appertaining thereto; *for quieting dormant claims, ascertaining and securing tenant-rights*; and for the sale of all the forest lands, and other lands, tenements, and hereditaments, held by his majesty in right of the said principality, or county palatine of Chester, *and for applying the produce thereof to the public service*."

3d. "A bill for uniting to the crown the duchy and county palatine of Lancaster; for the suppression of unnecessary offices now belonging thereto; for the *ascertainment and security of tenant and other rights*; and for the sale of all rents, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, and forests, within the said duchy and county palatine, or either of them; *and for applying the produce thereof to the public service*."—*And it was ordered that* Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, Sir George Savile, Colonel Barrè, Mr. Thomas Townshend, Mr. Byng, Mr Dunning, Sir Joseph Mawbey, Mr. Recorder of London, Sir Robert Clayton, Mr. Frederick Montagu, the Earl of Upper Ossory, Sir William Guise, and Mr. Gilbert, *do prepare and bring in the same*.

At the same time, Mr. Burke moved for leave to bring in—4th. "A bill for uniting the duchy of Cornwall to the crown; for the suppression of certain unnecessary offices now belonging thereto; for the *ascertainment and security of tenant and other rights*; and for the sale of certain rents, lands, and tenements, within or belonging to the said duchy; *and for applying the produce thereof to the public service*."

But some objections being made by the surveyor-general of the duchy concerning the rights of the prince of Wales, now in his minority, and Lord North remaining perfectly silent, Mr. Burke, at length, though he strongly contended against the principle of the objection, consented to withdraw this last motion for the *present*, to be renewed upon an early occasion.

* The motion was seconded by Mr. Fox.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

AT THE GUILDHALL, IN BRISTOL, PREVIOUS TO THE LATE ELECTION IN THAT CITY, UPON CERTAIN POINTS RELATIVE TO HIS PALIAMENTARY CONDUCT. 1780.

MR. MAYOR, AND GENTLEMEN,

I AM extremely pleased at the appearance of this large and respectable meeting. The steps I may be obliged to take will want the sanction of a considerable authority; and in explaining any thing which may appear doubtful in my public conduct, I must naturally desire a very full audience.

I have been backward to begin my canvass.—The dissolution of the parliament was uncertain; and it did not become me, by an unseasonable importunity, to appear diffident of the fact of my six years' endeavours to please you. I had served the city of Bristol honourably; and the city of Bristol had no reason to think, that the means of honourable service to the public, were become indifferent to me.

I found on my arrival here, that three gentlemen had been long in eager pursuit of an object which but two of us can obtain. I found, that they had all met with encouragement. A contested election in such a city as this, is no light thing. I paused on the brink of the precipice. These three gentlemen, by various merits, and on various titles, I made no doubt were worthy of your favour. I shall never attempt to raise myself by depreciating the merits of my competitors. In the complexity and confusion of these cross pursuits, I wished to take the authentic public sense of my friends upon a business of so much delicacy. I wished to take your opinion along with me; that if I should give up the contest at the very beginning, my surrender of my post may not seem the effect of inconstancy, or timidity, or anger, or disgust, or indolence, or any other temper unbecoming a man who has engaged in the public service. If, on the contrary, I should undertake the election, and fail of success, I was full as anxious, that it should be manifest to the whole world, that the peace of the city had not been broken by my rashness, presumption, or fond conceit of my own merit.

I am not come, by a false and counterfeit shew of deference to your judgment, to seduce it in my favour. I ask it seriously and unaffectedly. If you wish that I should retire, I shall not consider that advice as a censure upon my conduct, or an alteration in your sentiments; but as a rational submission to the circumstances of affairs. If, on the contrary, you should think it proper for me to proceed on my canvass, if you will risk the trouble on your part, I will risk it on mine. My pretensions are such as you cannot be ashamed of, whether they succeed or fail.

If you call upon me, I shall solicit the favour of the city upon manly ground. I come before you with the plain confidence of an honest servant in the equity of a candid and discerning master. I come to claim your approbation, not to amuse you with vain apologies, or with professions still more vain and senseless. I have lived too long to be served by apologies, or to stand in need of them. The part I have acted has been in open day; and to hold out to a conduct, which stands in that clear and steady light for all its good and all its evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises—I never will do it.—They may obscure it with their smoke; but they never can illumine sunshine by such a flame as theirs.

I am sensible that no endeavours have been left untried to injure me in your opinion. But the use of character is to be a shield against calumny. I could wish, undoubtedly (if idle wishes were not the most idle of all things) to make every part of my conduct agreeable to every one of my constituents. But in so great a city, and so greatly divided as this, it is weak to expect it.

In such a discordancy of sentiments, it is better to look to the nature of things than to the humours of men. The very attempt towards pleasing every body, discovers a temper always flashy, and often false and insincere. Therefore, as I have proceeded strait onward in my conduct, so I will proceed in my account of those parts of it which have been

most excepted to. But I must first beg leave just to hint to you, that we may suffer very great detriment by being open to every talker. It is not to be imagined, how much of service is lost from spirits full of activity, and full of energy, who are pressing, who are rushing forward, to great and capital objects, when you oblige them to be continually looking back. Whilst they are defending one service, they defraud you of an hundred. Applaud us when we run; console us when we fall; cheer us when we recover; but let us pass on—for God's sake, let us pass on.

Do you think, gentlemen, that every public act in the six years since I stood in this place before you—that all the arduous things which have been done in this eventful period, which has crowded into a few years' space the revolutions of an age, can be opened to you on their fair grounds in half an hour's conversation?

But it is no reason, because there is a bad mode of inquiry, that there should be no examination at all. Most certainly it is our duty to examine; it is our interest too.—But it must be with discretion; with an attention to all the circumstances, and to all the motives; like sound judges, and not like cavilling pettifoggers and quibbling pleaders, prying into flaws and hunting for exceptions.—Look, gentlemen, to the *whole tenour* of your member's conduct. Try whether his ambition or his avarice have justled him out of the strait line of duty; or whether that grand foe of the offices of active life, that master-vice in men of business, a degenerate and inglorious sloth, has made him flag and languish in his course? This is the object of our inquiry. If our member's conduct can bear this touch, mark it for sterling. He may have fallen into errours; he must have faults; but our errour is greater, and our fault is radically ruinous to ourselves, if we do not bear, if we do not even applaud, the whole compound and mixed mass of such a character. Not to act thus is folly; I had almost said it is impiety. He censures God, who quarrels with the imperfections of man.

Gentlemen, we must not be peevish with those who serve the people. For none will serve us whilst there is a court to serve, but those who are of a nice and jealous honour. They who think every thing, in comparison of that honour, to be dust and ashes, will not bear to have it soiled and impaired by those, for whose sake they make a thousand sacrifices to preserve it immaculate and whole. We shall either drive such men from the public stage, or we shall send them to the court for protection: where, if they must sacrifice their reputation, they will at least secure their interest. Depend upon it, that the lovers of freedom will be free. None will violate their conscience to please us, in order afterwards to discharge that conscience, which they have violated, by doing us faithful and affectionate service. If we degrade and deprave their minds by servility, it will be absurd to expect, that they who are creeping and abject towards us, will ever be bold and incorruptible assertors of our freedom, against the most seducing and the most formidable of all powers. No! human nature is not so formed; nor shall we improve the faculties or better the morals of public men, by our possession of the most infallible receipt in the world for making cheats and hypocrites.

Let me say with plainness, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our representatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal scope to their understandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a very enlarged view of things; we shall at length infallibly degrade our national representation into a confused and scuffling bustle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the service of the crown will be the sole nursery of statesmen. Among the frolics of the court, it may at length take that of attending to its business. Then the monopoly of mental power will be added to the power of all other kinds it possesses. On the side of the people there will be nothing but impotence: for ignorance is impotence; narrowness of mind is impotence; timidity is itself impotence, and makes all other qualities that go along with it, impotent and useless.

At present it is the plan of the court to make its servants insignificant. If the people should fall into the same humour, and should choose their servants on the same principles of mere obsequiousness, and flexibility, and total vacancy or indifference of opinion in all public matters, then no part of the state will be sound; and it will be in vain to think of saving it.

I thought it very expedient at this time to give you this candid counsel; and with this counsel I would willingly close, if the matters which at various times have been objected to me in this city concerned only myself, and my own election. These charges, I think, are four in number;—my neglect of a due attention to my constituents, the not paying more frequent visits here;—my conduct on the affairs

of the first Irish trade acts;—my opinion and mode of proceeding on Lord Beauchamp's debtors' bills;—and my votes on the late affairs of the Roman Catholics. All of these (except perhaps the first) relate to matters of very considerable public concern; and it is not lest you should censure me improperly, but lest you should form improper opinions on matters of some moment to you, that I trouble you at all upon the subject. My conduct is of small importance.

With regard to the first charge, my friends have spoken to me of it in the style of amicable expostulation; not so much blaming the thing, as lamenting the effects.—Others, less partial to me, were less kind in assigning the motives. I admit, there is a decorum and propriety in a member of parliament's paying a respectful court to his constituents. If I were conscious to myself that pleasure or dissipation, or low unworthy occupations, had detained me from personal attendance on you, I would readily admit my fault, and quietly submit to the penalty. But, gentlemen, I live at an hundred miles distance from Bristol; and at the end of a session I come to my own house, fatigued in body and in mind, to a little repose, and to a very little attention to my family and my private concerns. A visit to Bristol is always a sort of canvass; else it will do more harm than good. To pass from the toils of a session to the toils of a canvass, is the furthest thing in the world from repose. I could hardly serve you *as I have done*, and court you too. Most of you have heard, that I do not very remarkably spare myself in *public* business; and in the *private* business of my constituents I have done very near as much as those who have nothing else to do. My canvass of you was not on the change, nor in the county meetings, nor in the clubs of this city: It was in the house of commons; it was at the custom-house; it was at the council; it was at the treasury; it was at the admiralty. I canvassed you through your affairs, and not your persons. I was not only your representative as a body; I was the agent, the solicitor of individuals; I ran about wherever your affairs could call me; and in acting for you I often appeared rather as a ship-broker, than as a member of parliament. There was nothing too laborious, or too low for me to undertake. The meanness of the business was raised by the dignity of the object. If some lesser matters have slipped through my fingers, it was because I filled my hands too full; and in my eagerness to serve you, took in more than any hands could grasp. Several gentlemen stand round me who are my willing witnesses; and there are others who, if they were here, would be still better; because they would be unwilling witnesses to the same truth. It was in the middle of a summer residence in London, and in the middle of a negotiation at the admiralty for your trade, that I was called to Bristol; and this late visit, at this late day, has been possibly in prejudice to your affairs.

Since I have touched upon this matter, let me say, gentlemen, that if I had a disposition, or a right to complain, I have some cause of complaint on my side. With a petition of this city in my hand, passed through the corporation without a dissenting voice, a petition in unison with almost the whole voice of the kingdom, (with whose formal thanks I was covered over,) while I laboured on no less than five bills for a public reform, and fought against the opposition of great abilities, and of the greatest power, every clause, and every word of the largest of those bills, almost to the very last day of a very long session; all this time a canvass in Bristol was as calmly carried on as if I were dead. I was considered as a man wholly out of the question. Whilst I watched, and fasted, and sweated in the house of commons—by the most easy and ordinary arts of election, by dinners and visits, by "How do you do's," and "My worthy friends," I was to be quietly moved out of my seat—and promises were made, and engagements entered into, without any exception or reserve, as if my laborious zeal in my duty had been a regular abdication of my trust.

To open my whole heart to you on this subject, I do confess, however, that there were other times besides the two years in which I did visit you, when I was not wholly without leisure for repeating that mark of my respect. But I could not bring my mind to see you. You remember, that in the beginning of this American war (that sera of calamity, disgrace and downfall, an sera which no feeling mind will ever mention without a tear for England) you were greatly divided; and a very strong body, if not the strongest, opposed itself to the madness which every art and every power were employed to render popular, in order that the errours of the rulers might be lost in the general blindness of the nation. This opposition continued until after our great, but most unfortunate victory at Long Island. Then all the mounds and banks of our constancy were borne down at once; and the phrensy of the American war broke in upon us like a deluge. This victory, which seemed to put an immediate end to all difficulties, perfected us in that

spirit of domination, which our unparalleled prosperity had but too long nurtured. We had been so very powerful, and so very prosperous, that even the humblest of us were degraded into the vices and follies of kings. We lost all measure between means and ends; and our headlong desires became our politics and our morals. All men who wished for peace, or retained any sentiments of moderation, were overborne or silenced; and this city was led by every artifice (and probably with the more management, because I was one of your members) to distinguish itself by its zeal for that fatal cause. In this temper of yours and of my mind, I should have sooner fled to the extremities of the earth, than have shewn myself here. I, who saw in every American victory (for you have had a long series of these misfortunes) the germ and seed of the naval power of France and Spain, which all our heat and warmth against America was only hatching into life,—I should not have been a welcome visitant with the brow and the language of such feelings. When afterwards, the other face of your calamity was turned upon you, and shewed itself in defeat and distress, I shunned you full as much. I felt sorely this variety in our wretchedness; and I did not wish to have the least appearance of insulting you with that shew of superiority, which, though it may not be assumed, is generally suspected in a time of calamity, from those whose previous warnings have been despised. I could not bear to shew you a representative whose face did not reflect that of his constituents; a face that could not joy in your joys, and sorrow in your sorrows. But time at length has made us all of one opinion; and we have all opened our eyes on the true nature of the American war, to the true nature of all its successes and all its failures.

In that public storm too I had my private feelings. I had seen blown down and prostrate on the ground several of those houses to whom I was chiefly indebted for the honour this city has done me. I confess, that whilst the wounds of those I loved were yet green, I could not bear to shew myself in pride and triumph in that place into which their partiality had brought me, and to appear at feasts and rejoicings, in the midst of the grief and calamity of my warm friends, my zealous supporters, my generous benefactors. This is a true, unvarnished, undisguised state of the affair. You will judge of it.

This is the only one of the charges in which I am personally concerned. As to the other matters objected against me, which in their turn I shall mention to you, remember once more I do not mean to extenuate or excuse. Why should I, when the things charged are among those upon which I found all my reputation? What would be left to me, if I myself was the man, who softened, and blended, and diluted, and weakened, all the distinguishing colours of my life, so as to leave nothing distinct and determinate in my whole conduct?

It has been said, and it is the second charge, that in the questions of the Irish trade, I did not consult the interest of my constituents; or, to speak out strongly, that I rather acted as a native of Ireland, than as an English member of parliament.

I certainly have very warm good wishes for the place of my birth. But the sphere of my duties is my true country. It was, as a man attached to your interests, and zealous for the conservation of your power and dignity, that I acted on that occasion, and on all occasions. You were involved in the American war. A new world of policy was opened, to which it was necessary we should conform, whether we would or not; and my only thought was how to conform to our situation in such a manner as to unite to this kingdom, in prosperity and in affection, whatever remained of the empire. I was true to my old, standing, invariable principle, that all things, which came from Great Britain, should issue as a gift of her bounty and beneficence, rather than as claims recovered against a struggling litigant; or at least, that if your beneficence obtained no credit in your concessions, yet that they should appear the salutary provisions of your wisdom and foresight; not as things wrung from you with your blood, by the cruel gripe of a rigid necessity. The first concessions, by being (much against my will) mangled and stripped of the parts which were necessary to make out their just correspondence and connection in trade, were of no use. The next year a feeble attempt was made to bring the thing into better shape. This attempt (countenanced by the minister) on the very first appearance of some popular uneasiness, was, after a considerable progress through the house, thrown out by *him*.

What was the consequence? The whole kingdom of Ireland was instantly in a flame. Threatened by foreigners, and, as they thought, insulted by England, they resolved at once to resist the power of France, and to cast off yours. As for us, we were able neither to protect nor to restrain them. Forty thousand men were raised and disciplined without commission from the crown. Two illegal armies were seen with banners displayed at the same

time and in the same country. No executive magistrate, no judicature, in Ireland, would acknowledge the legality of the army which bore the king's commission; and no law, or appearance of law, authorized the army commissioned by itself. In this unexampled state of things, which the least errour, the least trespass on the right or left, would have hurried down the precipice into an abyss of blood and confusion, the people of Ireland demand a freedom of trade with arms in their hands. They interdict all commerce between the two nations. They deny all new supply in the house of commons, although in time of war. They stint the trust of the old revenue, given for two years to all the king's predecessors, to six months. The British parliament, in a former session, frightened into a limited concession by the menaces of Ireland, frightened out of it by the menaces of England, were now frightened back again, and made an universal surrender of all that had been thought the peculiar, reserved, uncommunicable rights of England;—the exclusive commerce of America, of Africa, of the West Indies—all the enumerations of the acts of navigation—all the manufactures—iron, glass, even the last pledge of jealousy and pride, the interest hid in the secret of our hearts, the inveterate prejudice moulded into the constitution of our frame, even the sacred fleece itself, all went together. No reserve; no exception; no debate; no discussion. A sudden light broke in upon us all. It broke in, not through well-contrived and well-disposed windows, but through flaws and breaches; through the yawning chasms of our ruin. We were taught wisdom by humiliation. No town in England presumed to have a prejudice; or dared to mutter a petition. What was worse, the whole parliament of England, which retained authority for nothing but surrenders, was despoiled of every shadow of its superintendence. It was, without any qualification, denied in theory, as it had been trampled upon in practice. This scene of shame and disgrace has, in a manner, while I am speaking, ended by the perpetual establishment of a military power in the dominions of this crown, without consent of the British legislature,* contrary to the policy of the constitution, contrary to the declaration of right: and by this your liberties are swept away along with your supreme authority—and both, linked together from the beginning, have, I am afraid, both together perished, for ever.

What! gentlemen, was I not to foresee, or, foreseeing, was I not to endeavour to save you from all these multiplied mischiefs and disgraces? Would the little, silly, canvass prattle, of obeying instructions, and having no opinions but yours, and such idle senseless tales, which amuse the vacant ears of unthinking men, have saved you from the "pelting of that pitiless storm," to which the loose improvidence, the cowardly rashness, of those who dare not look danger in the face, so as to provide against it in time, and therefore throw themselves headlong into the midst of it, have exposed this degraded nation, beat down and prostrate on the earth, unsheltered, unarmed, unresisting? Was I an Irishman on that day, that I boldly withstood our pride? or on the day that I hung down my head, and wept in shame and silence over the humiliation of Great Britain? I became unpopular in England for the one, and in Ireland for the other. What then? What obligation lay on me to be popular? I was bound to serve both kingdoms. To be pleased with my service, was their affair, not mine.

I was an Irishman in the Irish business, just as much as I was an American, when on the same principles, I wished you to concede to America, at a time when she prayed concession at our feet. Just as much was I an American when I wished parliament to offer terms in victory, and not to wait the well chosen hour of defeat, for making good by weakness, and by supplication, a claim of prerogative, pre-eminence, and authority.

Instead of requiring it from me, as a point of duty, to kindle with your passions, had you all been as cool as I was, you would have been saved disgraces and distresses that are unutterable. Do you remember our commission? We sent out a solemn embassy across the Atlantic ocean, to lay the crown, the peerage, the commons of Great Britain, at the feet of the American congress. That our disgrace might want no sort of brightening and burnishing; observe who they were that composed this famous embassy. My Lord Carlisle is among the first ranks of our nobility. He is the identical man who but two years before had been put forward, at the opening of a session in the house of lords, as the mover of a haughty and rigorous address against America. He was put in the front of the embassy of submission. Mr. Eden was taken from the office of Lord Suffolk, to whom he was then under secretary of state; from the office of that Lord Suffolk, who but a few weeks before, in his place in parliament, did not deign to enquire where a congress of vagrants was to be found. This Lord Suffolk sent Mr. Eden to find these vagrants, without knowing where

* Irish perpetual mutiny act.

to find these vagrants, without knowing where this king's generals were to be found, who were joined in the same commission of supplicating those whom they were sent to subdue. They enter the capital of America only to abandon it; and these assertors and representatives of the dignity of England, at the tail of a flying army, let fly their Parthian shafts of memorials and remonstrances at random behind them. Their promises and their offers, their flatteries and their menaces, were all despised; and we were saved the disgrace of their formal reception, only because the congress scorned to receive them; whilst the state-house of independent Philadelphia opened her doors to the public entry of the ambassador of France. From war and blood we went to submission; and from submission plunged back again to war and blood; to desolate and be desolated, without measure, hope, or end. I am a royalist, I blushed for this degradation of the crown. I am a whig, I blushed for the dishonour of parliament. I am a true Englishman, I felt to the quick for the disgrace of England. I am a man, I felt for the melancholy reverse of human affairs, in the fall of the first power in the world.

To read what was approaching in Ireland, in the black and bloody characters of the American war, was a painful, but it was a necessary part of my public duty. For, gentlemen, it is not your fond desires or mine that can alter the nature of things; by contending against which, what have we got, or shall ever get, but defeat and shame? I did not obey your instructions: No. I conformed to the instructions of truth and nature, and maintained your interest, against your opinions, with a constancy that became me. A representative worthy of you, ought to be a person of stability. I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to such opinions as you and I *must* have five years hence. I was not to look to the flash of the day. I knew that you chose me, in my place, along with others, to be a pillar of the state, and not a weathercock on the top of the edifice, exalted for my levity and versatility, and of no use but to indicate the shiftings of every fashionable gale. Would to God, the value of my sentiments on Ireland and on America had been at this day a subject of doubt and discussion! No matter what my sufferings had been, so that this kingdom had kept the authority I wished it to maintain, by a grave foresight, and by an equitable temperance in the use of its power.

The next article of charge on my public conduct, and that which I find rather the most prevalent of all, is, Lord Beauchamp's bill. I mean his bill of last session, for reforming the law-process concerning imprisonment. It is said, to aggravate the offence, that I treated the petition of this city with contempt even in presenting it to the house, and expressed myself in terms of marked disrespect. Had this latter part of the charge been true, no merits on the side of the question which I took, could possibly excuse me. But I am incapable of treating this city with disrespect. Very fortunately, at this minute (if my bad eyesight does not deceive me) the worthy gentleman* deputed on this business stands directly before me. To him I appeal, whether I did not, though it militated with my oldest and my most recent public opinions, deliver the petition with a strong, and more than usual recommendation to the consideration of the house, on account of the character and consequence of those who signed it. I believe the worthy gentleman will tell you, that the very day I received it, I applied to the solicitor, now the attorney general, to give it an immediate consideration; and he most obligingly and instantly consented to employ a great deal of his very valuable time to write an explanation of the bill. I attended the committee with all possible care and diligence, in order that every objection of yours might meet with a solution; or produce an alteration. I intreated your learned recorder (always ready in business in which you take a concern) to attend.

But what will you say to those who blame me for supporting Lord Beauchamp's bill, as a disrespectful treatment of your petition, when you hear, that out of respect to you, I myself was the cause of the loss of that very bill? for the noble lord who brought it in, and who, I must say, has much merit for this and some other measures, at my request consented to put it off for a week, which the speaker's illness lengthened to a fortnight; and then the frantic tumult about popery drove that and every rational business from the house. So that if I chose to make a defence of myself, on the little principles of a culprit, pleading in his exculpation, I might not only secure my acquittal, but make merit with the opposers of the bill. But I shall do no such thing. The truth is, that I did occasion the loss of the bill, and by a delay caused by my respect to you. But such an event was never in my contemplation. And I am so far from taking credit for the defeat of that measure, that I cannot sufficiently lament my misfortune, if

* Mr. Williams

but one man, who ought to be at large, has passed a year in prison by my means. I am a debtor to the debtors. I confess judgment. I owe what, if ever it be in my power, I shall most certainly pay,—ample atonement and usurious amends to liberty and humanity for my unhappy lapse. For, gentlemen, Lord Beauchamp's bill was a law of justice and policy, as far as it went; I say as far as it went, for its fault was its being, in the remedial part, miserably defective.

There are two capital faults in our law with relation to civil debts. One is, that every man is presumed solvent. A presumption, in innumerable cases, directly against truth. Therefore the debtor is ordered, on a supposition of ability and fraud, to be coerced his liberty until he makes payment. By this means, in all cases of civil insolvency, without a pardon from his creditor, he is to be imprisoned for life:—and thus a miserable mistaken invention of artificial science, operates to change a civil into a criminal judgment, and to scourge misfortune or indiscretion with a punishment which the law does not inflict on the greatest crimes.

The next fault is, that the inflicting of that punishment is not on the opinion of an equal and public judge; but is referred to the arbitrary discretion of a private, nay interested, and irritated, individual. He, who formally is, and substantially ought to be, the judge, is in reality no more than ministerial, a mere executive instrument of a private man, who is at once judge and party. Every idea of judicial order is subverted by this procedure. If the insolvency be no crime, why is it punished with arbitrary imprisonment? If it be a crime, why is it delivered into private hands to pardon without discretion, or to punish without mercy and without measure?

To these faults, gross and cruel faults in our aw, the excellent principle of Lord Beauchamp's bill applied some sort of remedy. I know that credit must be preserved; but equity must be preserved too; and it is impossible that any thing should be necessary to commerce, which is inconsistent with justice. The principle of credit was not weakened by that bill. God forbid! The enforcement of that credit was only put into the same public judicial hands on which we depend for our lives, and all that makes life dear to us. But, indeed, this business was taken up too warmly both here and elsewhere. The bill was extremely mistaken. It was supposed to enact what it never enacted; and complaints were made of clauses in it as novelties. which existed before the noble lord that brought in the bill was born. There was a fallacy that ran through tho whole of the objections. The gentlemen who opposed the bill, always argued, as if the option lay between that bill and the ancient law.—But this is a grand mistake. For practically, the option is between, not that bill and the old law, but between that bill and those occasional laws, called acts of grace. For the operation of the old law is so savage, and so inconvenient to society, that for a long time past, once in every parliament, and lately twice, the legislature has been obliged to make a general arbitrary jail-delivery, and at once to set open, by its sovereign authority, all the prisons in England.

Gentlemen, I never relished acts of grace; nor ever submitted to them but from despair of better. They are a dishonourable invention, by which, not from humanity, not from policy; but merely because we have not room enough to hold these victims of the absurdity of our laws, we turn loose upon the public three or four thousand naked wretches, corrupted by the habits, debased by the ignominy, of a prison. If the creditor had a right to those carcasses as a natural security for his property, I am sure we have no right to deprive him of that security. But if the few pounds of flesh were not necessary to his security, we had not a right to detain the unfortunate debtor, without any benefit at all to the person who confined him.—Take it as you will, we commit injustice. Now Lord Beauchamp's bill intended to do deliberately, and with great caution and circumspection, upon each several case, and with all attention to the just claimant, what acts of grace do in a much greater measure, and with very little care, caution, or deliberation.

I suspect that here too, if we contrive to oppose this bill, we shall be found in a struggle against the nature of things. For as we grow enlightened, the public will not bear, for any length of time, to pay for the maintenance of whole armies of prisoners, nor, at their own expense, submit to keep jails as a sort of garrisons, merely to fortify the absurd principle of making men judges in their own cause. For credit has little or no concern in this cruelty. I speak in a commercial assembly. You know that credit is given, because capital *must* be employed; that men calculate the chances of insolvency; and they either withhold the credit, or make the debtor pay the risk in the price. The counting-house has no alliance with the jail. Holland understands trade as well as we, and she has done much more than this obnoxious bill intended to do

There was not, when Mr. Howard visited Holland, more than one prisoner for debt in the great city of Rotterdam. Although Lord Beauchamp's act (which was previous to this bill, and intended to feel the way for it) has already preserved liberty to thousands; and though it is not three years since the last act of grace passed, yet by Mr. Howard's last account, there were near three thousand again in jail. I cannot name this gentleman without remarking, that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe—not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art; not to collect medals, or collate manuscripts:—but to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the guage and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original; and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt more or less in every country: I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail but in gross, the reward of those who visit the prisoner; and he has so forestalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter.

Nothing now remains to trouble you with, but the fourth charge against me—the business of the Roman Catholics. It is a business closely connected with the rest. They are all on one and the same principle. My little scheme of conduct, such as it is, is all arranged. I could do nothing but what I have done on this subject, without confounding the whole train of my ideas, and disturbing the whole order of my life. Gentlemen, I ought to apologize to you, for seeming to think any thing at all necessary to be said upon this matter. The calumny is fitter to be scrawled with the midnight chalk of incendiaries, with "No popery," on walls and doors of devoted houses, than to be mentioned in any civilized company. I had heard, that the spirit of discontent on that subject was very prevalent here. With pleasure I find that I have been grossly misinformed. If it exists at all in this city, the laws have crushed its exertions, and our morals have shamed its appearance in day-light. I have pursued this spirit wherever I could trace it; but it still fled from me. It was a ghost which all had heard of, but none had seen. None would acknowledge that he thought the public proceeding with regard to our Catholic dissenters to be blameable; but several were sorry it had made an ill impression upon others, and that my interest was hurt by my share in the business. I find with satisfaction and pride, that not above four or five in this city (and I dare say these misled by some gross misrepresentation) have signed that symbol of delusion and bond of sedition, that libel on the national religion and English character, the Protestant Association. It is therefore, gentlemen, not by way of cure but of prevention, and lest the arts of wicked men may prevail over the integrity of any one among us, that I think it necessary to open to you the merits of this transaction pretty much at large; and I beg your patience upon it: for, although the reasonings that have been used to depreciate the act are of little force, and though the authority of the men concerned in this ill design is not very imposing; yet the audaciousness of these conspirators against the national honour, and the extensive wickedness of their attempts, have raised persons of little importance to a degree of evil eminence, and imparted a sort of sinister dignity to proceedings that had their origin in only the meanest and blindest malice.

In explaining to you the proceedings of parliament which have been complained of, I will state to you,—first, the thing that was done;—next, the persons who did it;—and lastly, the grounds and reasons upon which the legislature proceeded in this deliberate act of public justice and public prudence.

Gentlemen, the condition of our nature is such, that we buy our blessings at a price. The Reformation, one of the greatest periods of human improvement, was a time of trouble and confusion. The vast structures of superstition and tyranny, which had been for ages in rearing, and which was combined with the interest of the great and of the many; which was moulded into the laws, the manners, and civil institutions of nations, and blended with the frame and policy of states; could not be brought to the ground without a fearful struggle; nor could it fall without a violent concussion of itself and all about it. When this great revolution was attempted in a more regular mode by government, it was opposed by plots and seditions of the people; when by popular

forts, it was repressed as rebellion by the nd of power; and bloody executions (often oodily returned) marked the whole of its proess through all its stages. The affairs of ligion, which are no longer heard of in the nsult of our present contentions, made a incipal ingredient in the wars and politics that time; the enthusiasm of religion threw gloom over the politics; and political intests poisoned and perverted the spirit of reion upon all sides. The Protestant religion that violent struggle, infected, as the Popish d been before, by worldly interest and orldly passions, became a persecutor in its rn, sometimes of the new sects, which card their own principles further than it was nvenient to the original reformers; and ways of the body from whom they parted; d this persecuting spirit arose, not only from e bitterness of retaliation, but from the merless policy of fear.

It was long before the spirit of true piety d true wisdom, involved in the principles of e Reformation, could be depurated from the egs and feculence of the contention with hich it was carried through. However, until is be done, the Reformation is not complete; d those who think themselves good Protstants, from their animosity to others, are in at respect no Protestants at all. It was at st thought necessary, perhaps, to oppose to pery another Popery, to get the better of it. hatever was the cause, laws were made in any countries, and in this kingdom in parcular, against Papists, which are as bloody any of those which had been enacted by the pish princes and states; and where those ws were not bloody, in my opinion, they ere worse; as they were slow, cruel outges on our nature, and kept men alive only insult in their persons every one of the rights d feelings of humanity. I pass those states, because I would spare your pious ears e repetition of such shocking things; and I me to that particular law, the repeal of which s produced so many unnatural and unexcted consequences.

A statute was fabricated in the year 1699, which the saying mass (a church-service the Latin tongue, not exactly the same as r liturgy, but very near it, and containing offence whatsoever against the laws, or ainst good morals) was forged into a crime nishable with perpetual imprisonment. The aching school, an useful and virtuous occupan, even the teaching in a private family, s in every Catholic subjected to the same proportioned punishment. Your industry, and the bread of your children, was taxed for a pecuniary reward to stimulate avarice to do what nature refused, to inform and prosecute on this law. Every Roman Catholic was under the same act, to forfeit his estate to his nearest Protestant relation, until, through a profession of what he did not believe, he redeemed by his hypocrisy, what the law had transferred to the kinsman as the recompense of his profligacy. When thus turned out of doors from his paternal estate, he was disabled from acquiring any other by any industry, donation or charity; but was rendered a foreigner in his native land, only because he retained the religion, along with the property, handed down to him from those who had been the old inhabitants of that land before him.

Does any one who hears me, approve this scheme of things, or think there is common justice, common sense, or common honesty in any part of it? If any does, let him say it, and I am ready to discuss the point with temper and candour. But instead of approving, I perceive a virtuous indignation beginning to rise in your minds on the mere cold stating of the statute.

But what will you feel, when you know from history how this statute passed, and what were the motives, and what the mode of making it? A party in this nation, enemies to the system of the revolution, were in opposition to the government of king William. They knew that our glorious deliverer was an enemy to all persecution. They knew that he came to free us from slavery and popery, out of a country, where a third of the people are contented Catholics under a Protestant government. He came with a part of his army, composed of those very Catholics, to overset the power of a popish prince. Such is the effect of a tolerating spirit: and so much is liberty served in every way, and by all persons, by a manly adherence to its own principles. Whilst freedom is true to itself, every thing becomes subject to it; and its very adversaries are an instrument in its hands.

The party I speak of (like some among us who would disparage the best friends of their country) resolved to make the king either violate his principles of toleration, or incur the odium of protecting Papists. They therefore brought in this bill, and made it purposely wicked and absurd that it might be rejected. The then court-party, discovering their game, turned the tables on them, and returned their bill to them stuffed with still greater absurdities, that its loss might lie upon its original authors They, finding their own ball thrown

back to them, kicked it back again to their adversaries. And thus this act, loaded with the double injustice of two parties, neither of whom intended to pass, what they hoped the other would be persuaded to reject, went through the legislature, contrary to the real wish of all parts of it, and of all the parties that composed it. In this manner these insolent and profligate factions, as if they were playing with balls and counters, made a sport of the fortunes and the liberties of their fellow-creatures. Other acts of persecution have been acts of malice. This was a subversion of justice from wantonness and petulance. Look into the history of Bishop Burnet. He is a witness without exception.

The effects of the act have been as mischievous, as its origin was ludicrous and shameful. From that time every person of that communion, lay and ecclesiastic, has been obliged to fly from the face of day. The clergy, concealed in garrets of private houses, or obliged to take a shelter (hardly safe to themselves, but infinitely dangerous to their country) under the privileges of foreign ministers, officiated as their servants, and under their protection. The whole body of the Catholics, condemned to beggary and to ignorance in their native land, have been obliged to learn the principles of letters, at the hazard of all their other principles, from the charity of your enemies. They have been taxed to their ruin at the pleasure of necessitous and profligate relations, and according to the measure of their necessity and profligacy. Examples of this are many and affecting. Some of them are known by a friend who stands near me in this hall. It is but six or seven years since a clergyman of the name of Malony, a man of morals, neither guilty nor accused of any thing noxious to the state, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment for exercising the functions of his religion; and after lying in jail two or three years, was relieved by the mercy of government from perpetual imprisonment, on condition of perpetual banishment. A brother of the earl of Shrewsbury, a Talbot, a name respectable in this country, whilst its glory is any part of its concern, was hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey, among common felons, and only escaped the same doom, either by some errour in the process, or that the wretch who brought him there could not correctly describe his person; I now forget which. —In short, the persecution would never have relented for a moment, if the judges superseding (though with an ambiguous example) the strict rule of their artificial duty by the higher obligation of their conscience, did not constantly throw every difficulty in the way of such informers. But so ineffectual is the power of legal evasion against legal iniquity, that it was but the other day, that a lady of condition, beyond the middle of life, was on the point of being stripped of her whole fortune by a near relation, to whom she had been a friend and benefactor: and she must have been totally ruined, without a power of redress or mitigation from the courts of law, had not the legislature itself rushed in, and by a special act of parliament rescued her from the injustice of its own statutes. One of the acts authorizing such things was that which we in part repealed, knowing what our duty was; and doing that duty as men of honour and virtue, as good Protestants, and as good citizens. Let him stand forth that disapproves what we have done!

Gentlemen, bad laws are the worst sort of tyranny. In such a country as this they are of all bad things the worst, worse by far than any where else; and they derive a particular malignity even from the wisdom and soundness of the rest of our institutions. For very obvious reasons you cannot trust the crown with a dispensing power over any of your laws. However, a government, be it as bad as it may, will in the exercise of a discretionary power, discriminate times and persons; and will not ordinarily pursue any man, when its own safety is not concerned. A mercenary informer knows no distinction. Under such a system, the obnoxious people are slaves, not only to the government, but they live at the mercy of every individual; they are at once the slaves of the whole community, and of every part of it; and the worst and most unmerciful men are those on whose goodness they most depend.

In this situation men not only shrink from the frowns of a stern magistrate; but they are obliged to fly from their very species. The seeds of destruction are sown in civil intercourse, in social habitudes. The blood of wholesome kindred is infected. Their tables and beds are surrounded with snares. All the means given by Providence to make life safe and comfortable, are perverted into instruments of terrour and torment. This species of universal subserviency, that makes the very servant who waits behind your chair, the arbiter of your life and fortune, has such a tendency to degrade and debase mankind, and to deprive them of that assured and liberal state of mind, which alone can make us what we ought to be, that I vow to God I would sooner bring myself to put a man to immediate death for opinions I disliked, and so to get rid of the

man and his opinions at once, than to fret him with a feverish being, tainted with the jail-distemper of a contagious servitude to keep him above ground, an animated mass of putrefaction, corrupted himself, and corrupting all about him.

The act repealed was of this direct tendency; and it was made in the manner which I have related to you. I will now tell you by whom the bill of repeal was brought into parliament. I find it has been industriously given out in this city (from kindness to me unquestionably) that I was the mover or the seconder. The fact is, I did not once open my lips on the subject during the whole progress of the bill. I do not say this as disclaiming my share in that measure. Very far from it. I inform you of this fact, lest I should seem to arrogate to myself the merits which belong to others. To have been the man chosen out to redeem our fellow-citizens from slavery; to purify our laws from absurdity and injustice; and to cleanse our religion from the blot and stain of persecution, would be an honour and happiness to which my wishes would undoubtedly aspire; but to which nothing but my wishes could have possibly entitled me. That great work was in hands in every respect far better qualified than mine. The mover of the bill was Sir George Savile.

When an act of great and signal humanity was to be done, and done with all the weight and authority that belonged to it, the world could cast its eyes upon none but him. I hope that few things which have a tendency to bless or to adorn life, have wholly escaped my observation in my passage through it. I have sought the acquaintance of that gentleman, and have seen him in all situations. He is a true genius; with an understanding vigorous, and acute, and refined, and distinguished even to excess; and illuminated with a most unbounded, peculiar, and original cast of imagination. With these he possesses many external and instrumental advantages; and he makes use of them all. His fortune is among the largest; a fortune which, wholly unincumbered, as it is, without one single charge from luxury, vanity, or excess, sinks under the benevolence of its dispenser. This private benevolence, expanding itself into patriotism, renders his whole being the estate of the public, in which he has not reserved a *peculium* for himself of profit, diversion, or relaxation. During the session, the first in, and the last out of the house of commons; he passes from the senate to the camp; and seldom seeing the seat of his ancestors, he is always in the senate to serve his country, or in the field to defend it. But in all well-wrought compositions, some particulars stand out more eminently than the rest; and the things which will carry his name to posterity, are his two bills; I mean that for a limitation of the claims of the crown upon landed estates; and this for the relief of the Roman Catholics. By the former, he has emancipated property; by the latter he has quieted conscience; and by both, he has taught that grand lesson to government and subject, —no longer to regard each other as adverse parties.

Such was the mover of the act that is complained of by men, who are not quite so good as he is; an act, most assuredly not brought in by him from any partiality to the sect which is the object of it. For, among his faults, I really cannot help reckoning a greater degree of prejudice against that people, than becomes so wise a man. I know that he inclines to a sort of disgust, mixed with a considerable degree of asperity, to the system; and he has few, or rather no habits with any of its professors. What he has done was on quite other motives. The motives were these, which he declared in his excellent speech on his motion for the bill; namely, his extreme zeal to the Protestant religion, which he thought utterly disgraced by the act of 1699; and his rooted hatred to all kind of oppression, under any colour, or upon any pretence whatsoever.

The seconder was worthy of the mover, and the motion. I was not the seconder; it was Mr. Dunning, Recorder of this city. I shall say the less of him, because his near relation to you makes you more particularly acquainted with his merits. But I should appear little acquainted with them, or little sensible of them, if I could utter his name on this occasion without expressing my esteem for his character. I am not afraid of offending a most learned body, and most jealous of its reputation for that learning, when I say he is the first of his profession. It is a point settled by those who settle every thing else; and I must add (what I am enabled to say from my own long and close observation) that there is not a man, of any profession, or in any situation, of a more erect and independent spirit; of a more proud honour; a more manly mind; a more firm and determined integrity. Assure yourselves, that the names of two such men will bear a great load of prejudice in the other scale, before they can be entirely outweighed.

With this mover, and this seconder, agreed the *whole* house of commons; the *whole* house of lords; the *whole* bench of bishops; the king;

the ministry; the opposition; all the distinguished clergy of the establishment; all the eminent lights (for they were consulted) of the dissenting churches. This according voice of national wisdom ought to be listened to with reverence. To say that all these descriptions of Englishmen unanimously concurred in a scheme for introducing the Catholic religion, or that none of them understood the nature and effects of what they were doing, so well as a few obscure clubs of people, whose names you never heard of, is shamelessly absurd. Surely it is paying a miserable compliment to the religion we profess, to suggest that every thing eminent in the kingdom is indifferent, or even adverse to that religion, and that its security is wholly abandoned to the zeal of those, who have nothing but their zeal to distinguish them. In weighing this unanimous concurrence of whatever the nation has to boast of, I hope you will recollect, that all these concurring parties do by no means love one another enough to agree in any point, which was not, both evidently, and importantly, right.

To prove this; to prove, that the measure was both clearly and materially proper, I will next lay before you (as I promised) the political grounds and reasons for the repeal of that penal statute; and the motives to its repeal at that particular time.

Gentlemen, America——When the English nation seemed to be dangerously, if not irrecoverably divided; when one, and that the most growing branch, was torn from the parent stock, and ingrafted on the power of France, a great terrour fell upon this kingdom. On a sudden we awakened from our dreams of conquest, and saw ourselves threatened with an immediate invasion; which we were at that time very ill prepared to resist. You remember the cloud that gloomed over us all. In that hour of our dismay, from the bottom of the hiding-places, into which the indiscriminate rigour of our statutes had driven them, came out the body of the Roman Catholics. They appeared before the steps of a tottering throne, with one of the most sober, measured, steady, and dutiful addresses that was ever presented to the crown. It was no holyday ceremony; no anniversary compliment of parade and show. It was signed by almost every gentleman of that persuasion, of note or property, in England. At such a crisis, nothing but a decided resolution to stand or fall with their country could have dictated such an address; the direct tendency of which was to cut off all retreat; and to render them peculiarly obnoxious to an invader of their own communion. The address shewed what I long languished to see, that all the subjects of England had cast off all foreign views and connections, and that every man looked for his relief from every grievance, at the hands only of his own natural government.

It was necessary, on our part, that the natural government should shew itself worthy of that name. It was necessary, at the crisis I speak of, that the supreme power of the state should meet the conciliatory dispositions of the subject. To delay protection would be to reject allegiance. And why should it be rejected, or even coldly and suspiciously received? If any independent Catholic state should choose to take part with this kingdom in a war with France and Spain, that bigot (if such a bigot could be found) would be heard with little respect, who could dream of objecting his religion to an ally, whom the nation would not only receive with its freest thanks, but purchase with the last remains of its exhausted treasure. To such an ally we should not dare to whisper a single syllable of those base and invidious topics, upon which, some unhappy men would persuade the state, to reject the duty and allegiance of its own members. Is it then because foreigners are in a condition to set our malice at defiance, that with *them*, we are willing to contract engagements of friendship, and to keep them with fidelity and honour; but that, because we conceive some descriptions of our countrymen are not powerful enough to punish our malignity, we will not permit them to support our common interest? Is it on that ground, that our anger is to be kindled by their offered kindness? Is it on that ground, that they are to be subjected to penalties, because they are willing, by actual merit, to purge themselves from imputed crimes? Lest by an adherence to the cause of their country they should acquire a title to fair and equitable treatment, are we resolved to furnish them with causes of eternal enmity; and rather supply them with just and founded motives to disaffection, than not to have that disaffection in existence to justify an oppression, which, not from policy but disposition, we have pre-determined to exercise?

What shadow of reason could be assigned, why, at a time, when the most Protestant part of this Protestant empire found it for its advantage to unite with the two principal Popish states, to unite itself in the closet bonds with France and Spain, for our destruction, that we should refuse to unite with our own Catholic countrymen for our own preservation? Ought we, like madmen, to tear off the plais-

ters, that the lenient hand of prudence had spread over the wounds and gashes, which in our delirium of ambition we had given to our own body? No person ever reprobated the American war more than I did, and do, and ever shall. But I never will consent that we should lay additional voluntary penalties on ourselves, for a fault which carries but too much of its own punishment in its own nature. For one, I was delighted with the proposal of internal peace. I accepted the blessing with thankfulness and transport; I was truly happy to find *one* good effect of our civil distractions, that they had put an end to all religious strife and heart-burning in our own bowels. What must be the sentiments of a man, who would wish to perpetuate domestic hostility, when the causes of dispute are at an end; and who, crying out for peace with one part of the nation on the most humiliating terms, should deny it to those, who offer friendship without any terms at all?

But if I was unable to reconcile such a denial to the contracted principles of local duty, what answer could I give to the broad claims of general humanity? I confess to you freely, that the sufferings and distresses of the people of America in this cruel war, have at times affected me more deeply than I can express. I felt every Gazette of triumph as a blow upon my heart, which has an hundred times sunk and fainted within me at all the mischiefs brought upon those who bear the whole brunt of war in the heart of their country. Yet the Americans are utter strangers to me; a nation among whom I am not sure that I have a single acquaintance. Was I to suffer my mind to be so unaccountably warped; was I to keep such iniquitous weights and measures of temper and of reason, as to sympathize with those who are in open rebellion against an authority which I respect, at war with a country which by every title ought to be, and is most dear to me; and yet to have no feeling at all for the hardships and indignities suffered by men, who by their very vicinity, are bound up in a nearer relation to us; who contribute their share, and more than their share, to the common prosperity; who perform the common offices of social life, and who obey the laws to the full as well as I do? Gentlemen, the danger to the state being out of the question (of which, let me tell you, statesmen themselves are apt to have but too exquisite a sense) I could assign no one reason of justice, policy, or feeling, for not concurring most cordially, as most cordially I did concur, in softening some part of that shameful servitude under which several of my worthy fellow-citizens were groaning.

Important effects followed this act of wisdom. They appeared at home and abroad, to the great benefit of this kingdom; and, let me hope, to the advantage of mankind at large. It betokened union among ourselves. It shewed soundness, even on the part of the persecuted, which generally is the weak side of every community. But its most essential operation was not in England. The act was immediately, though very imperfectly, copied in Ireland; and this imperfect transcript of an imperfect act, this first faint sketch of toleration, which did little more than disclose a principle, and mark out a disposition, completed in a most wonderful manner the reunion to the state, of all the Catholics of that country. It made us, what we ought always to have been, one family, one body, one heart and soul, against the family-combination, and all other combinations of our enemies. We have indeed obligations to that people, who received such small benefits with so much gratitude; and for which gratitude and attachment to us, I am afraid they have suffered not a little in other places.

I dare say, you have all heard of the privileges indulged to the Irish Catholics residing in Spain. You have likewise heard with what circumstances of severity they have been lately expelled from the sea-ports of that kingdom; driven into the inland cities; and there detained as a sort of prisoners of state. I have good reason to believe, that it was the zeal to our government and our cause, (somewhat indiscreetly expressed in one of the addresses of the Catholics of Ireland,) which has thus drawn down on their heads the indignation of the court of Madrid; to the inexpressible loss of several individuals, and in future, perhaps, to the great detriment of the whole of their body. Now that our people should be persecuted in Spain for their attachment to this country, and persecuted in this country for their supposed enmity to us, is such a jarring reconciliation of contradictory distresses, is a thing at once so dreadful and ridiculous, that no malice short of diabolical, would wish to continue any human creatures in such a situation. But honest men will not forget either their merit or their sufferings. There are men, (and many, I trust, there are,) who, out of love to their country and their kind, would torture their invention to find excuses for the mistakes of their brethren; and who, to stifle dissension, would construe even doubtful appearances, with the utmost favour: such men

will never persuade themselves to be ingenious and refined in discovering disaffection and treason in the manifest palpable signs of suffering loyalty. Persecution is so unnatural to them, that they gladly snatch the very first opportunity of laying aside all the tricks and devices of penal politics; and of returning home, after all their irksome and vexatious wanderings, to our natural family mansion, to the grand social principle, that unites all men, in all descriptions, under the shadow of an equal and impartial justice.

Men of another sort, I mean the bigoted enemies to liberty, may, perhaps, in their politics, make no account of the good or ill affection of the Catholics of England, who are but an handful of people (enough to torment, but not enough to fear,) perhaps not so many, of both sexes and of all ages, as fifty thousand. But, gentlemen, it is possible you may not know, that the people of that persuasion in Ireland amount at least to sixteen or seventeen hundred thousand souls. I do not at all exaggerate the number. A *nation* to be persecuted! Whilst we were masters of the sea, embodied with America, and in alliance with half the powers of the continent, we might perhaps, in that remote corner of Europe, afford to tyrannize with impunity. But there is a revolution in our affairs, which makes it prudent to be just. In our late awkward contest with Ireland about trade, had religion been thrown in, to ferment and embitter the mass of discontents, the consequences might have been truly dreadful. But very happily, that cause of quarrel was previously quieted by the wisdom of the acts I am commending.

Even in England, where I admit the danger from the discontent of that persuasion to be less than in Ireland; yet even here, had we listened to the councils of fanaticism and folly, we might have wounded ourselves very deeply; and wounded ourselves in a very tender part. You are apprised, that the Catholics of England consist mostly of our best manufacturers. Had the legislature chosen, instead of returning their declarations of duty with correspondent good-will, to drive them to despair, there is a country at their very door, to which they would be invited; a country in all respects as good as ours, and with the finest cities in the world ready built to receive them. And thus the bigotry of a free country, and in an enlightened age, would have re-peopled the cities of Flanders, which, in the darkness of two hundred years ago, had been desolated by the superstition of a cruel tyrant. Our manufacturers were the growth of the persecutions in the Low Countries. What a spectacle would it be to Europe, to see us at this time of day, balancing the account of tyranny with those very countries, and by our persecutions, driving back trade and manufacture, as a sort of vagabonds, to their original settlement! But I trust we shall be saved this last of disgraces.

So far as to the effect of the act on the interests of this nation. With regard to the interests of mankind at large, I am sure the benefit was very considerable. Long before this act, indeed, the spirit of toleration began to gain ground in Europe. In Holland, the third part of the people are Catholics; they live at ease; and are a sound part of the state. In many parts of Germany, Protestants and Papists partake the same cities, the same councils, and even the same churches. The unbounded liberality of the king of Prussia's conduct on this occasion is known to all the world; and it is of a piece with the other grand maxims of his reign. The magnanimity of the imperial court, breaking through the narrow principles of his predecessors, has indulged its protestant subjects, not only with property, with worship, with liberal education; but with honours and trusts, both civil and military. A worthy protestant gentleman of this country now fills, and fills with credit, a high office in the Austrian Netherlands. Even the Lutheran obstinacy of Sweden has thawed at length, and opened a toleration to all religions. I know myself, that in France the Protestants begin to be at rest. The army, which in that country is every thing, is open to them; and some of the military rewards and decorations which the laws deny, are supplied by others, to make the service acceptable and honourable. The first minister of finance in that country, is a Protestant. Two years war without a tax is among the first-fruits of their liberality. Tarnished as the glory of this nation is, and as far as it has waded into the shades of an eclipse, some beams of its former illumination still play upon its surface; and what is done in England is still looked to, as argument, and as example. It is certainly true, that no law of this country ever met with such universal applause abroad, or was so likely to produce the perfection of that tolerating spirit, which, as I observed, has been long gaining ground in Europe; for abroad, it was universally thought that we had done, what, I am sorry to say, we had not; they thought we had granted a full toleration. That opinion was however so far from hurting the Protestant cause, that I declare, with the most serious solemnity, my firm belief, that no one thing

done for these fifty years past, was so likely to prove deeply beneficial to our religion at large as Sir George Savile's act. In its effects it was, "an act for tolerating and protecting Protestantism throughout Europe:" and I hope that those who were taking steps for the quiet and settlement of our Protestant brethren in other countries, will even yet, rather consider the steady equity of the greater and better part of the people of Great Britain, than the vanity and violence of a few.

I perceive, gentlemen, by the manner of all about me, that you look with horrour on the wicked clamour which has been raised on this subject; and that instead of an apology for what was done, you rather demand from me an account, why the execution of the scheme of toleration, was not made more answerable to the large and liberal grounds on which it was taken up. The question is natural and proper; and I remember that a great and learned magistrate,* distinguished for his strong and systematic understanding, and who at that time was a member of the house of commons, made the same objection to the proceeding. The statutes, as they now stand, are, without doubt, perfectly absurd. But I beg leave to explain the cause of this gross imperfection, in the tolerating plan, as well and as shortly as I am able. It was universally thought, that the session ought not to pass over without doing *something* in this business. To revise the whole body of the penal statutes was conceived to be an object too big for the time. The penal statute therefore which was chosen for repeal (chosen to shew our disposition to conciliate, not to perfect a toleration) was this act of ludicrous cruelty, of which I have just given you the history. It is an act, which, though not by a great deal so fierce and bloody as some of the rest, was infinitely more ready in the execution. It was the act which gave the greatest encouragement to those pests of society, mercenary informers, and interested disturbers of household peace; and it was observed with truth, that the prosecutions, either carried to conviction or compounded, for many years, had been all commenced upon that act. It was said, that whilst we were deliberating on a more perfect scheme, the spirit of the age would never come up to the execution of the statutes which remained; especially as more steps, and a co-operation of more minds and powers were required towards a mischievous use of them, than for the execution of the act to be repealed; that it was better to unravel this texture from below than from above, beginning with the latest, which, in general practice, is the severest evil. It was alleged, that this slow proceeding would be attended with the advantage of a progressive experience; and that the people would grow reconciled to toleration, when they should find by the effects, that justice was not so irreconcilable an enemy to convenience as they had imagined.

These, gentlemen, were the reasons why we left this good work in the rude unfinished state, in which good works are commonly left, through the tame circumspection with which a timid prudence so frequently enervates beneficence. In doing good, we are generally cold, and languid, and sluggish; and of all things afraid of being too much in the right. But the works of malice and injustice are quite in another style. They are finished with a bold masterly hand; touched as they are with the spirit of those vehement passions that call forth all our energies whenever we oppress and persecute.

Thus this matter was left for the time, with a full determination in parliament, not to suffer other and worse statutes to remain for the purpose of counteracting the benefits proposed by the repeal of one penal law; for nobody then dreamed of defending what was done as a benefit, on the ground of its being no benefit at all. We were not then ripe for so mean a subterfuge.

I do not wish to go over the horrid scene that was afterwards acted. Would to God it could be expunged for ever from the annals of this country! But since it must subsist for our shame, let it subsist for our instruction. In the year 1780, there were found in this nation men deluded enough (for I give the whole to their delusion) on pretences of zeal and piety, without any sort of provocation whatsoever, real or pretended, to make a desperate attempt, which would have consumed all the glory and power of this country, in the flames of London; and buried all law, order, and religion, under the ruins of the metropolis of the Protestant world. Whether all this mischief done, or in the direct train of doing, was in their original scheme, I cannot say; I hope it was not; but this would have been the unavoidable consequence of their proceedings, had not the flames they had lighted up in their fury been extinguished in their blood.

All the time that this horrid scene was acting, or avenging, as well as for some time before, and ever since, the wicked instigators of this unhappy multitude, guilty, with every

* The Chancellor.

aggravation, of all their crimes, and screened in a cowardly darkness from their punishment, continued, without interruption, pity or remorse, to blow up the blind rage of the populace, with a continued blast of pestilential libels, which infected and poisoned the very air we breathed in.

The main drift of all the libels, and all the riots, was, to force parliament (to persuade us was hopeless) into an act of national perfidy, which has no example. For, gentlemen, it is proper you should all know what infamy we escaped by refusing that repeal, for a refusal of which, it seems, I, among others, stand somewhere or other accused. When we took away, on the motives which I had the honour of stating to you, a few of the innumerable penalties upon an oppressed and injured people, the relief was not absolute, but given on a stipulation and compact between them and us; for we bound down the Roman Catholics with the most solemn oaths, to bear true allegiance to this government; to abjure all sort of temporal power in any other; and to renounce, under the same solemn obligations, the doctrines of systematic perfidy, with which they stood (I conceive very unjustly) charged. Now our modest petitioners came up to us, most humbly praying nothing more, than that we should break our faith, without any one cause whatsoever of forfeiture assigned; and when the subjects of this kingdom had, on their part, fully performed their engagement, we should refuse, on our part, the benefit we had stipulated on the performance of these very conditions that were prescribed by our own authority, and taken on the sanction of our public faith—That is to say, when we had inveigled them with fair promises within our door, we were to shut it on them; and, adding mockery to outrage—to tell them, "Now we have got you fast—your consciences are bound to a power resolved on your destruction. We have made you swear, that your religion obliges you to keep your faith: fools as you are! we will now let you see, that our religion enjoins us to keep no faith with you."—They who would advisedly call upon us to do such things, must certainly have thought us not only a convention of treacherous tyrants, but a gang of the lowest and dirtiest wretches that ever disgraced humanity. Had we done this, we should have indeed proved, that there were *some* in the world whom no faith could bind; and we should have *convicted* ourselves of that odious principle of which Papists stood *accused* by those very savages, who wished us, on that accusation, to deliver them over to their fury.

In this audacious tumult, when our very name and character as gentlemen, was to be cancelled for ever along with the faith and honour of the nation, I, who had exerted myself very little on the quiet passing of the bill, thought it necessary then to come forward. I was not alone; but though some distinguished members on all sides, and particularly on ours, added much to their high reputation by the part they took on that day, (a part which will be remembered as long as honour, spirit, and eloquence have estimation in the world,) I may and will value myself so far, that yielding in abilities to many, I yielded in zeal to none. With warmth and with vigour, and animated with a just and natural indignation, I called forth every faculty that I possessed, and I directed it in every way in which I could possibly employ it. I laboured night and day. I laboured in parliament: I laboured out of parliament. If therefore the resolution of the house of commons, refusing to commit this act of unmatched turpitude, be a crime, I am guilty among the foremost. But indeed, whatever the faults of that house may have been, no one member was found hardy enough to propose so infamous a thing; and on full debate we passed the resolution against the petitions with as much unanimity, as we had formerly passed the law, of which these petitions demanded the repeal.

There was a circumstance (justice will not suffer me to pass it over) which, if any thing could enforce the reasons I have given, would fully justify the act of relief, and render a repeal, or any thing like a repeal, unnatural, impossible. It was the behaviour of the persecuted Roman Catholics under the acts of violence and brutal insolence, which they suffered. I suppose there are not in London less than four or five thousand of that persuasion from my country, who do a great deal of the most laborious works in the metropolis; and they chiefly inhabit those quarters, which were the principal theatre of the fury of the bigoted multitude. They are known to be men of strong arms, and quick feelings, and more remarkable for a determined resolution, than clear ideas, or much foresight. But though provoked by every thing that can stir the blood of men, their houses and chapels in flames, and with the most atrocious profanations of every thing which they hold sacred before their eyes, not a hand was moved to retaliate, or even to defend. Had a conflict once begun, the rage of their persecutors would have redoubled. Thus fury increasing by the reverberation of outrages, house being fired for

house, and church for chapel, I am convinced, that no power under heaven could have prevented a general conflagration; and at this day London would have been a tale. But I am well informed, and the thing speaks it, that their clergy exerted their whole influence to keep their people in such a state of forbearance and quiet, as, when I look back, fills me with astonishment; but not with astonishment only. Their merits on that occasion ought not to be forgotten; nor will they, when Englishmen come to recollect themselves. I am sure it were far more proper to have called them forth, and given them the thanks of both houses of parliament, than to have suffered those worthy clergymen, and excellent citizens, to be hunted into holes and corners, whilst we are making low-minded inquisitions into the number of their people; as if a tolerating principle was never to prevail, unless we were very sure that only a few could possibly take advantage of it. But indeed we are not yet well recovered of our fright. Our reason, I trust, will return with our security; and this unfortunate temper will pass over like a cloud.

Gentlemen, I have now laid before you a few of the reasons for taking away the penalties of the act of 1699, and for refusing to establish them on the riotous requisition of 1780. Because I would not suffer any thing which may be for your satisfaction to escape, permit me just to touch on the objections urged against our act and our resolves, and intended as a justification of the violence offered to both houses. "Parliament," they assert, "was too hasty, and they ought, in so essential and alarming a change, to have proceeded with a far greater degree of deliberation." The direct contrary. Parliament was too slow. They took fourscore years to deliberate on the repeal of an act which ought not to have survived a second session. When at length, after a procrastination of near a century, the business was taken up, it proceeded in the most public manner, by the ordinary stages, and as slowly as a law so evidently right as to be resisted by none, would naturally advance. Had it been read three times in one day, we should have shewn only a becoming readiness to recognise by protection the undoubted dutiful behaviour of those whom we had but too long punished for offences of presumption or conjecture. But for what end was that bill to linger beyond the usual period of an unopposed measure? Was it to be delayed until a rabble in Edinburgh should dictate to the church of England what measure of persecution was fitting for her safety? Was it to be adjourned until a fanatical force could be collected in London, sufficient to frighten us out of all our ideas of policy and justice? Were we to wait for the profound lectures on the reason of state, ecclesiastical and political, which the Protestant association have since condescended to read to us? Or were we, seven hundred peers and commoners, the only persons ignorant of the ribald invectives, which occupy the place of argument in those remonstrances, which every man of common observation had heard a thousand times over, and a thousand times over had despised? All men had before heard what they have to say; and all men at this day know what they dare to do; and I trust, all honest men are equally influenced by the one, and by the other.

But they tell us, that those our fellow-citizens, whose chains we have a little relaxed, are enemies to liberty and our free constitution.—Not enemies, I presume, to their own liberty. And as to the constitution, until we give them some share in it, I do not know on what pretence we can examine into their opinions about a business in which they have no interest or concern. But after all, are we equally sure, that they are adverse to our constitution, as that our statutes are hostile and destructive to them? For my part, I have reason to believe, their opinions and inclinations in that respect are various, exactly like those of other men: and if they lean more to the crown than I, and than many of you think we ought, we must remember, that he who aims at another's life, is not to be surprised if he flies into any sanctuary that will receive him. The tenderness of the executive power is the natural asylum of those upon whom the laws have declared war; and to complain that men are inclined to favour the means of their own safety, is so absurd, that one forgets the injustice in the ridicule.

I must fairly tell you, that so far as my principles are concerned, (principles, that I hope will only depart with my last breath,) that I have no idea of a liberty unconnected with honesty and justice. Nor do I believe, that any good constitutions of government or of freedom, can find it necessary for their security to doom any part of the people to a permanent slavery. Such a constitution of freedom, if such can be, is in effect no more than another name for the tyranny of the strongest faction; and factions in republics have been, and are, full as capable as monarchs, of the most cruel oppression and injustice. It is but too true, that the love, and even the very idea, of genuine liberty, is extremely rare. It is but too true, that there are many, whose whole

scheme of freedom is made up of pride, perverseness, and insolence. They feel themselves in a state of thraldom, they imagine that their souls are cooped and cabined in, unless they have some man, or some body of men, dependent on their mercy. This desire of having some one below them, descends to those who are the very lowest of all,—and a Protestant cobler, debased by his poverty, but exalted by his share of the ruling church, feels a pride in knowing it is by his generosity alone, that the peer, whose footman's instep he measures, is able to keep his chaplain from a jail. This disposition is the true source of the passion, which many men, in very humble life, have taken to the American war. *Our* subjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependants. This lust of party-power, is the liberty they hunger and thirst for; and this Syren song of ambition, has charmed ears, that one would have thought were never organized to that sort of music.

This way of *proscribing the citizens by denominations and general descriptions*, dignified by the name of reason of state, and security for constitutions and commonwealths, is nothing better at bottom, than the miserable invention of an ungenerous ambition, which would fain hold the sacred trust of power, without any of the virtues or any of the energies, that give a title to it; a receipt of policy, made up of a detestable compound of malice, cowardice, and sloth. They would govern men against their will; but in that government they would be discharged from the exercise of vigilance, providence, and fortitude; and therefore, that they may sleep on their watch, they consent to take some one division of the society into partnership of the tyranny over the rest. But let government, in what form it may be, comprehend the whole in its justice, and restrain the suspicious by its vigilance; let it keep watch and ward; let it discover by its sagacity, and punish by its firmness, all delinquency against its power, whenever delinquency exists in the overt acts; and then it will be as safe as ever God and nature intended it should be. Crimes are the acts of individuals, and not of denominations; and therefore arbitrarily to class men under general descriptions, in order to proscribe and punish them in the lump for a presumed delinquency, of which perhaps but a part, perhaps none at all, are guilty, is indeed a compendious method, and saves a world of trouble about proof; but such a method instead of being law, is an act of unnatural rebellion against the legal dominion of reason and justice; and this vice, in any constitution that entertains it, at one time or other will certainly bring on its ruin.

We are told that this is not a religious persecution, and its abettors are loud in disclaiming all severities on account of conscience. Very fine indeed! then let it be so; they are not persecutors; they are only tyrants. With all my heart. I am perfectly indifferent concerning the pretexts upon which we torment one another; or whether it be for the constitution of the church of England, or for the constitution of the state of England, that people choose to make their fellow-creatures wretched. When we were sent into a place of authority, you that sent us had yourselves but one commission to give. You could give us none to wrong or oppress, or even to suffer any kind of oppression or wrong, on any grounds whatsoever; not on political, as in the affairs of America; not on commercial, as in those of Ireland; not in civil, as in the laws for debt; not in religious, as in the statutes against Protestant or Catholic dissenters. The diversified but connected fabric of universal justice, is well cramped and bolted together in all its parts; and depend upon it, I have never employed, and I never shall employ, any engine of power which may come into my hands, to wrench it asunder. All shall stand, if I can help it, and all shall stand connected. After all, to complete this work, much remains to be done; much in the East, much in the West. But great as the work is, if our will be ready, our powers are not deficient.

Since you have suffered me to trouble you so much on this subject, permit me, gentlemen, to detain you a little longer. I am indeed most solicitous to give you perfect satisfaction. I find there are some of a better and softer nature than the persons with whom I have supposed myself in debate, who neither think ill of the act of relief, nor by any means desire the repeal, yet who, not accusing but lamenting what was done, on account of the consequences, have frequently expressed their wish, that the late act had never been made. Some of this description, and persons of worth, I have met with in this city. They conceive, that the prejudices, whatever they might be, of a large part of the people, ought not to have been shocked; that their opinions ought to have been previously taken, and much attended to; and that thereby the late horrid scenes might have been prevented.

I confess, my notions are widely different; and I never was less sorry for any action of my life. I like the bill the better, on account of the events of all kinds that followed it. It

relieved the real sufferers; it strengthened the state; and, by the disorders that ensued, we had clear evidence that there lurked a temper somewhere, which ought not to be fostered by the laws. No ill consequences whatever could be attributed to the act itself. We knew beforehand, or we were poorly instructed, that toleration is odious to the intolerant; freedom to oppressors; property to robbers; and all kinds and degrees of prosperity to the envious. We knew, that all these kinds of men would gladly gratify their evil dispositions under the sanction of law and religion, if they could: if they could not, yet, to make way to their objects, they would do their utmost to subvert al religion and all law. This we certainly knew. But knowing this, is there any reason, because thieves break in and steal, and thus bring detriment to you, and draw ruin on themselves, that I am to be sorry that you are in possession of shops, and of ware-houses, and of wholesome laws to protect them? Are you to build no houses, because desperate men may pull them down upon their own heads? Or, if a malignant wretch will cut his own throat because he sees you give alms to the necessitous and deserving; shall his destruction be attributed to your charity, and not to his own deplorable madness? If we repent of our good actions, what, I pray you, is left for our faults and follies? It is not the beneficence of the laws, it is the unnatural temper which beneficence can fret and sour, that is to be lamented. It is this temper which, by all rational means, ought to be sweetened and corrected. If froward men should refuse this cure, can they vitiate any thing but themselves? Does evil so re-act upon good, as not only to retard its motion, but to change its nature? If it can so operate, then good men will always be in the power of the bad; and virtue, by a dreadful reverse of order, must lie under perpetual subjection and bondage to vice.

As to the opinion of the people, which some think, in such cases, is to be implicitly obeyed; near two years' tranquillity, which followed the act, and its instant imitation in Ireland, proved abundantly, that the late horrible spirit was, in a great measure, the effect of insidious art, and perverse industry, and gross misrepresentation. But suppose that the dislike had been much more deliberate, and much more general than I am persuaded it was—When we know, that the opinions of even the greatest multitudes, are the standard of rectitude, I shall think myself obliged to make those opinions the masters of my conscience. But if it may be doubted whether Omnipotence itself is competent to alter the essential constitution of right and wrong, sure I am, that such *things*, as they and I, are possessed of no such power. No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleasing to the people. But the widest range of this politic complaisance is confined within the limits of justice. I would not only consult the interest of the people, but I would cheerfully gratify their humours. We are all a sort of children that must be soothed and managed. I think I am not austere or formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myself play my part in, any innocent buffooneries, to divert them. But I never will act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient, creature whatsoever, no, not so much as a kitling, to torment.

"But if I profess all this impolitic stubbornness, I may chance never to be elected into Parliament." It is certainly not pleasing to be put out of the public service. But I wish to be a member of Parliament, to have my share of doing good and resisting evil. It would therefore be absurd to renounce my objects, in order to obtain my seat. I deceive myself indeed most grossly, if I had not much rather pass the remainder of my life hidden in the recesses of the deepest obscurity, feeding my mind even with the visions and imaginations of such things, than to be placed on the most splendid throne of the universe, tantalized with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greatest situation any other than the greatest curse. Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude to you for having set me in a place, wherein I could lend the slightest help to great and laudable designs. If I have had my share, in any measure giving quiet to private property, and private conscience; if by my vote I have aided in securing to families the best possession, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their subjects, and subjects to their prince; if I have assisted to loosen the foreign holdings of the citizens, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the good will of his countrymen;—if I have thus taken my part with the best of men in the best of their actions, I can shut the book;—I might wish to read a page or two more—but this is enough for my measure. I have not lived in vain.

And now, Gentlemen, on this serious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you, let me take to myself some degree of honest pride on the nature of the

charges that are against me. I do not here stand before you accused of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not said, that, in the long period of my service, I have, in a single instance, sacrificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged, that to gratify any anger, or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any description of men, or any one man in any description. No! the charges against me, are all of one kind, that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me.—In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress—I will call to mind this accusation; and be comforted.

Gentlemen, I submit the whole to your judgment. Mr. Mayor, I thank you for the trouble you have taken on this occasion. In your state of health, it is particularly obliging. If this company should think it adviseable for me to withdraw, I shall respectfully retire; if you think otherwise, I shall go directly to the Council-house and to the Change, and without a moment's delay, begin my canvass.

BRISTOL, *September* 6, 1780.

AT a great and respectable meeting of the friends of EDMUND BURKE, Esq. held at the Guildhall this day;

The Right Worshipful the Mayor in the Chair.

Resolved, That Mr. Burke, as a representative for this city, has done all possible honour to himself as a senator and a man, and that we do heartily and honestly approve of his conduct, as the result of an enlightened loyalty to his sovereign; a warm and zealous love to his country, through its widely-extended empire; a jealous and watchful care of the liberties of his fellow-subjects; an enlarged and liberal understanding of our commercial interest; a humane attention to the circumstances of even the lowest ranks of the community; and a truly wise, politic, and tolerant spirit, in supporting the national church, with a reasonable indulgence to all who dissent from it; and we wish to express the most marked abhorrence of the base arts which have been employed, without regard to truth and reason, to misrepresent his eminent services to his country.

Resolved, That this resolution be copied out, and signed by the chairman, and be by him presented to Mr. Burke, as the fullest expression of the respectful and grateful sense we entertain of his merits and services, public and private, to the citizens of Bristol, as a man and a representative.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting be given to the right worshipful the Mayor, who so ably and worthily presided in this meeting.

Resolved, That it is the earnest request of this meeting to Mr. Burke, that he should again offer himself a candidate to represent this city in parliament; assuring him of that full and strenuous support which is due to the merits of so excellent a representative.

This business being over, Mr. Burke went to the Exchange, and offered himself as a candidate in the usual manner. He was accompanied to the Council-house, and from thence to the Exchange, by a large body of most respectable gentlemen, among whom were the following members of the corporation, viz. Mr. Mayor, Mr. Alderman Smith, Mr. Alderman Deane, Mr. Alderman Gordon, William Weare, Samuel Munckley, John Merlot, John Crofts, Levy Ames, John Fisher Weare, Benjamin Loscombe, Philip Protheroe, Samuel Span, Joseph Smith, Richard Bright, and John Noble, Esquires.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH, AT BRISTOL, ON DECLINING THE POLL. 1780.

BRISTOL, Saturday, 9th Sept. 1780.

This morning the sheriff and candidates assembled as usual, at the Council-house, and from thence proceeded to Guildhall. Proclamation being made for the electors to appear and give their votes, Mr. BURKE stood forward on the hustings, surrounded by a great number of the corporation and other principal citizens, and addressed himself to the whole assembly as follows:

GENTLEMEN,

I DECLINE the Election.—It has ever been my rule through life, to observe a proportion between my efforts and my objects. I have never been remarkable for a bold, active, and sanguine pursuit of advantages that are personal to myself.

I have not canvassed the whole of this city in form. But I have taken such a view of it.

as satisfies my own mind, that your choice will not ultimately fall upon me. Your city, gentlemen, is in a state of miserable distraction: and I am resolved to withdraw whatever share my pretensions may have had in its unhappy divisions. I have not been in haste; I have tried all prudent means; I have waited for the effect of all contingencies. If I were fond of a contest, by the partiality of my numerous friends (whom you know to be among the most weighty and respectable people of the city) I have the means of a sharp one in my hands. But I thought it far better with my strength unspent, and my reputation unimpaired, to do, early and from foresight, that which I might be obliged to do from necessity at last.

I am not in the least surprised, nor in the least angry at this view of things. I have read the book of life for a long time, and I have read other books a little. Nothing has happened to me, but what has happened to men much better than me, and in times and in nations full as good as the age and country that we live in. To say that I am no way concerned, would be neither decent nor true. The representation of *Bristol* was an object on many accounts dear to me; and I certainly should very far prefer it to any other in the kingdom. My habits are made to it; and it is in general more unpleasant to be rejected after long trial, than not to be chosen at all.

But, gentlemen, I will see nothing except your former kindness, and I will give way to no other sentiments than those of gratitude. From the bottom of my heart I thank you for what you have done for me. You have given me a long term, which is now expired. I have performed the conditions, and enjoyed all the profits to the full; and I now surrender your estate into your hands without being in a single tile or a single stone impaired or wasted by my use. I have served the public for fifteen years. I have served you in particular for six. What is passed is well stored. It is safe, and out of the power of fortune. What is to come, is in wiser hands than ours; and he, in whose hands it is, best knows whether it is best for you and me that I should be in parliament, or even in the world.

Gentlemen, the melancholy event of yesterday reads to us an awful lesson against being too much troubled about any of the objects of ordinary ambition. The worthy gentleman,* who has been snatched from us at the moment of the election, and in the middle of the contest, whilst his desires were as warm, and his hopes as eager as ours, has feelingly told us, what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue.

It has been usual for a candidate who declines, to take his leave by a letter to the sheriffs; but I received your trust in the face of day; and in the face of day I accept your dismission. I am not,—I am not at all ashamed to look upon you; nor can my presence discompose the order of business here. I humbly and respectfully take my leave of the sheriffs, the candidates, and the electors; wishing heartily that the choice may be for the best, at a time which calls, if ever time did call, for service that is not nominal. It is no plaything you are about. I tremble when I consider the trust I have presumed to ask. I confided perhaps too much in my intentions. They were really fair and upright; and I am bold to say, that I ask no ill thing for you, when on parting from this place I pray that whomever you choose to succeed me, he may resemble me exactly in all things, except in my abilities to serve, and my fortune to please you.

* Mr. Coombe.

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH,

ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER, 1783, UPON THE QUESTION FOR THE SPEAKER'S LEAVING THE CHAIR, IN ORDER FOR THE HOUSE TO RESOLVE ITSELF INTO A COMMITTEE ON MR. FOX'S EAST INDIA BILL.

MR. SPEAKER,

I THANK you for pointing to me. I really wished much to engage your attention in an early stage of the debate. I have been long very deeply, though perhaps ineffectually, engaged in the preliminary enquiries, which have continued without intermission for some years. Though I have felt, with some degree of sensibility, the natural and inevitable impressions of the several matters of fact, as they have been successively disclosed, I have not at any time attempted to trouble you on the merits of the subject; and very little on any of the points which incidentally arose in the course of our proceedings. But I should be sorry to be found totally silent upon this day. Our inquiries are now come to their final issue:—It is now to be determined whether the three years of laborious parliamentary research, whether the twenty years of patient Indian suffering, are to produce a substantial reform in our eastern administration; or whether our knowledge of the grievances has abated our zeal for the correction of them, and our very inquiry into the evil was only a pretext to elude the remedy which is demanded from us by humanity, by justice, and by every principle of true policy. Depend upon it, this business cannot be indifferent to our fame. It will turn out a matter of great disgrace or great glory to the whole British nation. We are on a conspicuous stage, and the world marks our demeanour.

I am therefore a little concerned to perceive the spirit and temper in which the debate has been all along pursued upon one side of the house. The declamation of the gentlemen who oppose the bill has been abundant and vehement; but they have been reserved and even silent about the fitness or unfitness of the plan to attain the direct object it has in view. By some gentlemen it is taken up (by way of exercise I presume) as a point of law on a question of private property, and corporate franchise; by others it is regarded as the petty intrigue of a faction at court, and argued merely as it tends to set this man a little higher, or that a little lower in situation and power. All the void has been filled up with invectives against coalition; with allusions to the loss of America with the activity and inactivity of ministers. The total silence of these gentlemen concerning the interest and well-being of the people of India, and concerning the interest which this nation has in the commerce and revenues of that country, is a strong indication of the value which they set upon these objects.

It has been a little painful to me to observe the intrusion into this important debate of such company as *quo warranto*, and *mandamus*, and *certiorari*; as if we were on a trial about mayors and aldermen, and capital burgesses; or engaged in a suit concerning the borough of Penryn, or Saltash, or St. Ives, or St. Mawes. Gentlemen have argued with as much heat and passion, as if the first things in the world were at stake; and their topics are such, as belong only to matter of the lowest and meanest litigation. It is not right, it is not worthy of us in this manner to depreciate the value, to degrade the majesty, of this grave deliberation of policy and empire.

For my part, I have thought myself bound, when a matter of this extraordinary weight came before me, not to consider, (as some gentlemen are so fond of doing,) whether the bill originated from a secretary of state for the home department, or from a secretary for the foreign; from a minister of influence or a minister of the people; from Jacob or from Esau.* I asked myself, and I asked myself nothing else, what part it was fit for a member of parliament, who has supplied a mediocrity of talents by the extreme of diligence, and who has thought himself obliged, by the re-

* An allusion made by Mr. Powis.

search of years, to wind himself into the inmost recesses and labyrinths of the Indian detail, what part, I say, it became such a member of parliament to take, when a minister of state, in conformity to a recommendation from the throne, has brought before us a system for the better government of the territory and commerce of the east. In this light, and in this only, I will trouble you with my sentiments.

It is not only agreed but demanded, by the right honourable gentleman,* and by those who act with him, that a *whole* system ought to be produced; that it ought not to be an *half measure;* that it ought to be no *palliative;* but a legislative provision, vigorous, substantial, and effective.—I believe that no man who understands the subject can doubt for a moment, that those must be the conditions of any thing deserving the name of a reform in the Indian government; that any thing short of them would not only be delusive, but, in this matter which admits no medium, noxious in the extreme.

To all the conditions proposed by his adversaries, the mover of the bill perfectly agrees; and on his performance of them he rests his cause. On the other hand, not the least objection has been taken, with regard to the efficiency, the vigour, or the completeness of the scheme. I am therefore warranted to assume, as a thing admitted, that the bills accomplish what both sides of the house demand as essential. The end is completely answered, so far as the direct and immediate object is concerned.

But though there are no direct, yet there are various collateral objections made; objections from the effects which this plan of reform for Indian administration may have on the privileges of great public bodies in England; from its probable influence on the constitutional rights, or on the freedom and integrity of the several branches of the legislature.

Before I answer these objections, I must beg leave to observe, that if we are not able to contrive some method of governing India *well*, which will not of necessity become the means of governing Great Britain *ill*, a ground is laid for their eternal separation; but none for sacrificing the people of that country to our constitution. I am however far from being persuaded that any such incompatibility of interest does at all exist. On the contrary I am certain that every means, effectual to preserve India from oppression, is a guard to preserve the British constitution from its worst corruption. To shew this, I will consider the objections, which I think are four.

1st. That the bill is an attack on the chartered rights of men.

2dly. That it increases the influence of the crown.

3dly. That it does *not* increase, but diminishes, the influence of the crown, in order to promote the interests of certain ministers and their party.

4thly. That it deeply affects the national credit.

As to the first of these objections; I must observe that the phrase of "the chartered rights *of men*," is full of affectation; and very unusual in the discussion of privileges conferred by charters of the present description. But it is not difficult to discover what end that ambiguous mode of expression, so often reiterated, is meant to answer.

The rights of *men*, that is to say, the natural rights of mankind, are indeed sacred things; and if any public measure is proved mischievously to affect them, the objection ought to be fatal to that measure, even if no charter at all could be set up against it. If these natural rights are further affirmed and declared by express covenants, if they are clearly defined and secured against chichane, against power, and authority, by written instruments and positive engagements, they are in a still better condition: they partake not only of the sanctity of the object so secured, but of that solemn public faith itself, which secures an object of such importance. Indeed this formal recognition, by the sovereign power, of an original right in the subject, can never be subverted, but by rooting up the holding radical principles of government, and even of society itself. The charters, which we call by distinction *great*, are public instruments of this nature; I mean the charters of king John and king Henry the third. The things secured by these instruments may, without any deceitful ambiguity, be very fitly called the *chartered rights of men*.

These charters have made the very name of a charter dear to the heart of every Englishman.—But, Sir, there may be, and there are charters, not only different in nature, but formed on principles the *very reverse* of those of the great charter. Of this kind is the charter of the East India company. *Magna charta* is a charter to restrain power, and to destroy monopoly. The East India charter is a char-

* Mr. Pitt.

ter to establish monopoly, and to create power. Political power and commercial monopoly are *not* the rights of men; and the rights of them derived from charters, it is fallacious and sophistical to call "the chartered rights of men." These chartered rights, (to speak of such charters and of their effects in terms of the greatest possible moderation,) do at least suspend the natural rights of mankind at large; and in their very frame and constitution are liable to fall into a direct violation of them.

It is a charter of this latter description (that is to say a charter of power and monopoly) which is affected by the bill before you. The bill, Sir, does, without question, affect it; it does affect it essentially and substantially. But having stated to you of what description the chartered rights are which this bill touches, I feel no difficulty at all in acknowledging the existence of those chartered rights, in their fullest extent. They belong to the company in the surest manner; and they are secured to that body by every sort of public sanction. They are stamped by the faith of the king; they are stamped by the faith of parliament; they have been bought for money, for money honestly and fairly paid; they have been bought for valuable consideration, over and over again.

I therefore freely admit to the East India company their claim to exclude their fellow-subjects from the commerce of half the globe. I admit their claim to administer an annual territorial revenue of seven millions sterling; to command an army of sixty thousand men; and to dispose (under the controul of a sovereign imperial discretion, and with the due observance of the natural and local law) of the lives and fortunes of thirty millions of their fellow-creatures. All this they possess by charter and by acts of parliament, (in my opinion,) without a shadow of controversy.

Those who carry the rights and claims of the company the furthest do not contend for more than this; and all this I freely grant. But granting all this, they must grant to me in my turn, that all political power which is set over men, and that all privilege claimed or exercised in exclusion of them, being wholly artificial, and for so much a derogation from the natural equality of mankind at large, ought to be some way or other exercised ultimately for their benefit.

If this is true with regard to every species of political dominion, and every description of commercial privilege, none of which can be original self-derived rights, or grants for the mere private benefit of the holders, then such rights, or privileges, or whatever else you choose to call them, are all in the strictest sense a *trust*; and it is of the very essence of every trust to be rendered *accountable*; and even totally to *cease*, when it substantially varies from the purposes for which alone it could have a lawful existence.

This I conceive, Sir, to be true of trusts of power vested in the highest hands, and of such as seem to hold of no human creature. But about the application of this principle to subordinate *derivative* trusts, I do not see how a controversy can be maintained. To whom then would I make the East India company accountable? Why, to parliament, to be sure; to parliament, from whom their trust was derived; to parliament, which alone is capable of comprehending the magnitude of its object, and its abuse; and alone capable of an effectual legislative remedy. The very charter, which is held out to exclude parliament from correcting malversation with regard to the high trust vested in the company, is the very thing which at once gives a title and imposes a duty on us to interfere with effect, wherever power and authority originating from ourselves are perverted from their purposes, and become instruments of wrong and violence.

If parliament, Sir, had nothing to do with this charter, we might have some sort of Epicurean excuse to stand aloof, indifferent spectators of what passes in the company's name in India and in London. But if we are the very cause of the evil, we are in a special manner engaged to the redress; and for us passively to bear with oppressions committed under the sanction of our own authority, is in truth and reason for this house to be an active accomplice in the abuse.

That the power notoriously, grossly abused has been bought from us is very certain. But this circumstance, which is urged against the bill, becomes an additional motive for our interference; lest we should be thought to have sold the blood of millions of men, for the base consideration of money. We sold, I admit, all that we had to sell; that is, our authority, not our controul. We had not a right to make a market of our duties.

I ground myself therefore on this principle—that if the abuse is proved, the contract is broken; and we re-enter into all our rights; that is, into the exercise of all our duties: Our own authority is indeed as much a trust originally, as the company's authority is a trust derivatively; and it is the use we make of the resumed power that must justify or condemn us in the resumption of it. When we have perfected the plan laid before us by the right

honourable mover, the world will then see what it is we destroy, and what it is we create. By that test we stand or fall; and by that test I trust that it will be found in the issue, that we are going to supersede a charter abused to the full extent of all the powers which it could abuse, and exercised in the plenitude of despotism, tyranny and corruption; and that in one and the same plan, we provide a real chartered security for the *rights of men* cruelly violated under that charter.

This bill, and those connected with it, are intended to form the *magna charta* of Hindostan. Whatever the treaty of Westphalia is to the liberty of the princes and free cities of the empire, and to the three religions there professed—Whatever the great charter, the statute of tallage, the petition of right, and the declaration of right, are to Great Britain, these bills are to the people of India. Of this benefit, I am certain, their condition is capable; and when I know that they are capable of more, my vote shall most assuredly be for our giving to full extent of their capacity of receiving; and charter of dominion shall stand as a bar in my way to their charter of safety and protection.

The strong admission I have made of the company's rights (I am conscious of it) binds me to do a great deal. I do not presume to condemn those who argue *a priori*, against the propriety of leaving such extensive political powers in the hands of a company of merchants. I know much is, and much more may be, said against such a system. But, with my particular ideas and sentiments, I cannot go that way to work. I feel an insuperable reluctance in giving my hand to destroy any established institution of government, upon a theory, however plausible it may be. My experience in life teaches me nothing clear upon the subject. I have known merchants with the sentiments and the abilities of great statesmen; and I have seen persons in the rank of statesmen, with the conceptions and characters of pedlars. Indeed, my observation has furnished me with nothing that is to be found in any habits of life or education, which tends wholly to disqualify men for the functions of government, but that, by which the power of exercising those functions is very frequently obtained, I mean a spirit and habits of low cabal and intrigue; which I have never, in one instance, seen united with a capacity for sound and manly policy.

To justify us in taking the administration of their affairs out of the hands of the East India company, on my principles, I must see several conditions. 1st. The object affected by the abuse should be great and important. 2d. The abuse affecting this great object ought to be a great abuse. 3d. It ought to be habitual, and not accidental. 4th. It ought to be utterly incurable in the body as it now stands constituted. All this ought to be made as visible to me as the light of the sun, before I should strike off an atom of their charter. A right honourable gentleman * has said, and said I think but once, and that very slightly (whatever his original demand for a plan might seem to require) that "there are abuses in the company's government." If that were all, the scheme of the mover of this bill, the scheme of his learned friend, and his own scheme of reformation (if he has any) are all equally needless. There are, and must be, abuses in all governments. It amounts to no more than a nugatory proposition. But before I consider of what nature these abuses are, of which the gentleman speaks so very lightly, permit me to recall to your recollection the map of the country which this abused chartered right affects. This I shall do, that you may judge whether in that map I can discover any thing like the first of my conditions; that is, Whether the object affected by the abuse of the East India company's power be of importance sufficiently to justify the measure and means of reform applied to it in this bill.

With very few, and those inconsiderable intervals, the British dominion, either in the company's name, or in the names of princes absolutely dependent upon the company, extends from the mountains that separate India from Tartary, to Cape Comorin, that is, one-and-twenty degrees of latitude!

In the northern parts it is a solid mass of land, about eight hundred miles in length, and four or five hundred broad. As you go southward, it becomes narrower for a space. It afterwards dilates; but narrower or broader, you possess the whole eastern and north-eastern coast of that vast country, quite from the borders of Pegu. Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, with Benares, (now unfortunately in our immediate possession,) measure 161,978 square English miles; a territory considerably larger than the whole kingdom of France. Oude, with its dependent provinces, is 53,286 square miles, not a great deal less than England. The Carnatic, with Tanjour and the Circars, is 65,948 square miles, very considerably larger than England; and the whole of the company's dominions, comprehending Bombay and Salsette, amounts to 281,412 square miles;

* Mr. Pitt.

which forms a territory larger than any European dominion, Russia and Turkey excepted. Through all that vast extent of country there is not a man who eats a mouthful of rice but by permission of the East India company.

So far with regard to the extent. The population of this great empire is not easy to be calculated. When the countries, of which it is composed, came into our possession, they were all eminently peopled, and eminently productive; though at that time considerably declined from their ancient prosperity. But since they are come into our hands! ——! However, if we make the period of our estimate immediately before the utter desolation of the Carnatic, and if we allow for the havoc which our government had even then made in these regions, we cannot, in my opinion, rate the population at much less than thirty millions of souls; more than four times the number of persons in the island of Great Britain.

My next inquiry to that of the number, is the quality and description of the inhabitants. This multitude of men does not consist of an abject and barbarous populace; much less of gangs of savages, like the Guaranies and Chiquitos, who wander on the waste borders of the river of Amazons, or the Plate; but a people for ages civilized and cultivated; cultivated by all the arts of polished life, whilst we were yet in the woods. There, have been (and still the skeletons remain) princes once of great dignity, authority, and opulence. There, are to be found the chiefs of tribes and nations. There, is to be found an ancient and venerable priesthood, the depository of their laws, learning, and history, the guides of the people whilst living, and their consolation in death; a nobility of great antiquity and renown; a multitude of cities, not exceeded in population and trade by those of the first class in Europe; merchants and bankers, individual houses of whom have once vied in capital with the bank of England; whose credit had often supported a tottering state, and preserved their governments in the midst of war and desolation; millions of ingenious manufacturers and mechanics; millions of the most diligent, and not the least intelligent, tillers of the earth. Here are to be found almost all the religions professed by men, the Braminical, the Mussulman, the Eastern and the Western Christian.

If I were to take the whole aggregate of our possessions there, I should compare it, as the nearest parallel I can find, with the empire of Germany. Our immediate possessions I should compare with the Austrian dominions, and they would not suffer in the comparison. The nabob of Oude might stand for the king of Prussia; the nabob of Arcot I would compare, as superior in territory, and equal in revenue, to the elector of Saxony. Cheyt Sing, the rajah of Benares, might well rank with the prince of Hesse, at least; and the rajah of Tanjore (though hardly equal in extent of dominion, superiour in revenue) to the elector of Bavaria. The Polygars and the northern Zemindars, and other great chiefs, might well class with the rest of the princes, dukes, counts, marquisses, and bishops in the empire; all of whom I mention to honour, and surely without disparagement to any or all of those most respectable princes and grandees.

All this vast mass, composed of so many orders and classes of men, is again infinitely diversified by manners, by religion, by hereditary employment, through all their possible combinations. This renders the handling of India a matter in a high degree critical and delicate. But oh! it has been handled rudely indeed. Even some of the reformers seem to have forgot that they had any thing to do but to regulate the tenants of a manor, or the shopkeepers of the next county town.

It is an empire of this extent, of this complicated nature, of this dignity and importance, that I have compared to Germany, and the German government; not for an exact resemblance, but as a sort of a middle term, by which India might be approximated to our understandings, and if possible to our feelings; in order to awaken something of sympathy for the unfortunate natives, of which I am afraid we are not perfectly susceptible, whilst we look at this very remote object through a false and cloudy medium.

My second condition, necessary to justify me in touching the charter, is, Whether the company's abuse of their trust, with regard to this great object, be an abuse of great atrocity. I shall beg your permission to consider their conduct in two lights; first the political, and then the commercial. Their political conduct (for distinctness) I divide again into two heads; the external, in which I mean to comprehend their conduct in their federal capacity, as it relates to powers and states independent, or that not long since were such; the other internal, namely their conduct to the countries either immediately subject to the company, or to those who, under the apparent government of native sovereigns, are in a state much lower, and much more miserable, than common subjection.

The attention, Sir, which I wish to preserve to method will not be considered as unnecessary or affected. Nothing else can help me to

selection out of the infinite mass of materials which have passed under my eye; or can keep my mind steady to the great leading points I have in view.

With regard therefore to the abuse of the external federal trust, I engage myself to you to make good these three positions:—First, I say, that from mount Imaus, (or whatever else you call that large range of mountains that walls the northern frontier of India,) where it touches us in the latitude of twenty-nine, to Cape Comorin, in the latitude of eight, that there is not a *single* prince, state, or potentate, great or small, in India, with whom they have come into contact, whom they have not sold. I say *sold*, though sometimes they have not been able to deliver according to their bargain.—Secondly, I say, that there is not a *single treaty* they have ever made, which they have not broken. Thirdly, I say, that there is not a single prince or state, who ever put any trust in the company, who is not utterly ruined; and that none are in any degree secure or flourishing, but in the exact proportion to their settled distrust and irreconcilable enmity to this nation.

These assertions are universal. I say in the full sense *universal*. They regard the external and political trust only; but I shall produce others fully equivalent in the internal. For the present, I shall content myself with explaining my meaning; and if I am called on for proof whilst these bills are depending (which I believe I shall not) I will put my finger on the appendixes to the reports, or on papers of record in the house, or the committees, which I have distinctly present to my memory, and which I think I can lay before you at half an hour's warning.

The first potentate sold by the company for money, was the Great Mogul—the descendant of Tamerlane. This high personage, as high as human veneration can look at, is by every account amiable in his manners, respectable for his piety according to his mode, and accomplished in all the Oriental literature. All this, and the title derived under his *charter*, to all that we hold in India, could not save him from the general *sale*. Money is coined in his name; in his name justice is administered; he is prayed for in every temple through the countries we possess—But he was sold.

It is impossible, Mr. Speaker, not to pause here for a moment, to reflect on the inconstancy of human greatness, and the stupendous revolutions that have happened in our age of wonders. Could it be believed when I entered into existence, or when you, a younger man, were born, that on this day, in this house, we should be employed in discussing the conduct of those British subjects who had disposed of the power and person of the Grand Mogul? This is no idle speculation. Awful lessons are taught by it, and by other events, of which it is not yet too late to profit.

This is hardly a digression; but I return to the sale of the Mogul. Two districts, Corah, and Allahabad, out of his immense grants, were reserved as a royal demesne to the donor of a kingdom, and the rightful sovereign of so many nations.—After withholding the tribute of £.260,000 a year, which the company was, by the *charter* they had received from this prince, under the most solemn obligation to pay, these districts were sold to his chief minister Sujah ul Dowlah; and, what may appear to some the worst part of the transaction, these two districts were sold for scarcely two years' purchase. The descendant of Tamerlane now stands in need almost of the common necessaries of life; and in this situation we do not even allow him, as bounty, the smallest portion of what we owe him in justice.

The next sale was that of the whole nation of the Rohillas, which the grand salesman, without a pretence of quarrel, and contrary to his own declared sense of duty and rectitude, sold to the same Sujah ul Dowlah. He sold the people to utter *extirpation*, for the sum of four hundred thousand pounds. Faithfully was the bargain performed on our side. Hafiz Rhamet, the most eminent of their chiefs, one of the bravest men of his time, and as famous throughout the East for the elegance of his literature, and the spirit of his poetical compositions (by which he supported the name of Hafiz) as for his courage, was invaded with an army of an hundred thousand men, and an English brigade. This man, at the head of inferiour forces was slain valiantly fighting for his country. His head was cut off, and delivered for money to a barbarian. His wife and children, persons of that rank, were seen begging an handful of rice through the English camp. The whole nation, with inconsiderable exceptions, was slaughtered or banished. The country was laid waste with fire and sword; and that land, distinguished above most others by the cheerful face of paternal government and protected labour, the chosen seat of cultivation and plenty, is now almost throughout a dreary desert, covered with rushes and briers, and jungles full of wild beasts.

The British officer who commanded in the delivery of the people thus sold, felt some

compunction at his employment. He represented these enormous excesses to the president of Bengal, for which he received a severe reprimand from the civil governour; and I much doubt whether the breach caused by the conflict, between the compassion of the military and the firmness of the civil governour, be closed at this hour.

In Bengal, Seraja Dowlah was sold to Mir Jaffier; Mir Jaffier was sold to Mir Cossim; and Mir Cossim was sold to Mir Jaffier again. The succession to Mir Jaffier was sold to his eldest son;—another son of Mir Jaffier, Mobarech ul Dowlah, was sold to his step-mother —The Maratta empire was sold to Rogaba; and Rogaba was sold and delivered to the Peishwa of the Marattas. Both Rogaba and the Peishwa of the Marattas were offered to sale to the rajah of Berar. Scindia, the chief of Malva, was offered to sale to the same rajah; and the Subah of the Decan was sold to the great trader Mahomet Ali, nabob of Arcot. To the same nabob of Arcot they sold Hyder Ali and the kingdom of Mysore. To Mahomet Ali they twice sold the kingdom of Tanjore. To the same Mahomet Ali they sold at least twelve sovereign princes, called the Polygars. But to keep things even, the territory of Tinnivelly, belonging to their nabob, they would have sold to the Dutch; and to conclude the account of sales, their great customer, the nabob of Arcot himself, and his lawful succession, has been sold to his second son, Amir ul Omrah, whose character, views, and conduct, are in the accounts upon your table. It remains with you whether they shall finally perfect this last bargain.

All these bargains and sales were regularly attended with the waste and havoc of the country, always by the buyer, and sometimes by the object of the sale. This was explained to you by the honourable mover, when he stated the mode of paying debts due from the country powers to the company. An honourable gentleman, who now is not in his place, objected to his jumping near two thousand miles for an example. But the southern example is perfectly applicable to the northern claim, as the northern is to the southern; for, throughout the whole space of these two thousand miles, take your stand where you will, the proceeding is perfectly uniform, and what is done in one part will apply exactly to the other.

My second assertion is, that the company never has made a treaty which they have not broken. This position is so connected with that of the sales of provinces and kingdoms, with the negotiation of universal distraction in every part of India, that a very minute detail may well be spared on this point. It has not yet been contended, by any enemy to the reform, that they have observed any public agreement. When I hear that they have done so in any one instance (which hitherto, I confess, I never heard alleged) I shall speak to the particular treaty. The governour general has even amused himself and the court of directors in a very singular letter to that board, in which he admits he has not been very delicate with regard to public faith; and he goes so far as to state a regular estimate of the sums which the company would have lost, or never acquired, if the rigid ideas of public faith entertained by his colleagues had been observed. The learned gentleman* over against me has indeed saved me much trouble. On a former occasion, he obtained no small credit, for the clear and forcible manner in which he stated what we have not forgot, and I hope he has not forgot, that universal systematic breach of treaties which had made the British faith proverbial in the East.

It only remains, Sir, for me just to recapitulate some heads.—The treaty with the mogul, by which we stipulated to pay him £.260,000, annually, was broken. This treaty they have broken, and not paid him a shilling. They broke their treaty with him, in which they stipulated to pay £.400,000 a year to the soubah of Bengal. They agreed with the mogul, for services admitted to have been performed, to pay Nudjif Cawn a pension. They broke this article with the rest, and stopped also this small pension. They broke their treaties with the Nizam, and with Hyder Ali. As to the Marattas, they had so many cross treaties with the states general of that nation, and with each of the chiefs, that it was notorious that no one of these agreements could be kept without grossly violating the rest. It was observed, that if the terms of these several treaties had been kept, two British armies would at one and the same time have met in the field to cut each other's throats. The wars which desolate India, originated from a most atrocious violation of public faith on our part. In the midst of profound peace, the company's troops invaded the Maratta territories, and surprised the island and fortress of Salsette. The Marattas nevertheless yielded to a treaty of peace, by which solid advantages were procured to the company. But this treaty, like every other treaty, was soon violated by the

* Mr. Dundas, Lord Advocate of Scotland.

company. Again the company invaded the Maratta dominions. The disaster that ensued gave occasion to a new treaty. The whole army of the company was obliged, in effect, to surrender to this injured, betrayed, and insulted people. Justly irritated, however, as they were, the terms which they prescribed were reasonable and moderate; and their treatment of their captive invaders of the most distinguished humanity. But the humanity of the Marattas was of no power whatsoever to prevail on the company to attend to the observance of the terms dictated by their moderation. The war was renewed with greater vigour than ever; and such was their insatiable lust of plunder, that they never would have given ear to any terms of peace, if Hyder Ali had not broke through the Gauts, and rushing like a torrent into the Carnatic, swept away every thing in his career. This was in consequence of that confederacy, which by a sort of miracle united the most discordant powers for our destruction, as a nation in which no other could put any trust, and who were the declared enemies of the human species.

It is very remarkable, that the late controversy between the several presidencies, and between them and the court of directors, with relation to these wars and treaties, has not been, which of the parties might be defended for his share in them; but on which of the parties the guilt of all this load of perfidy should be fixed. But I am content to admit all these proceedings to be perfectly regular, to be full of honour and good faith; and wish to fix your attention solely to that single transaction which the advocates of this system select for so transcendent a merit as to cancel the guilt of all the rest of their proceedings; I mean the late treaties with the Marattas.

I make no observation on the total cession of territory, by which they surrendered all they had obtained by their unhappy successes in war, and almost all they had obtained under the treaty of Poorunder. The restitution was proper, if it had been voluntary and seasonable. I attach on the spirit of the treaty, the dispositions it shewed, the provisions it made for a general peace, and the faith kept with allies and confederates; in order that the house may form a judgment, from this chosen piece, of the use which has been made (and is likely to be made, if things continue in the same hand) of the trust of the federal powers of this country.

It was the wish of almost every Englishman, but the Maratta peace might lead to a general one; because the Maratta war was only a part of a general confederacy formed against us on account of the universal abhorrence of our conduct which prevailed in every state and almost in every house in India. Mr. Hastings was obliged to pretend some sort of acquiescence in this general and rational desire. He therefore consented, in order to satisfy the point of honour of the Marattas, that an article should be inserted to admit Hyder Ali to accede to the pacification. But observe, Sir, the spirit of this man (which if it were not made manifest by a thousand things, and particularly by his proceedings with respect to Lord Macartney) would be sufficiently manifest by this—What sort of article think you does he require this essential head of a solemn treaty of general pacification to be? In his instruction to Mr. Anderson, he desires him to admit "a *vague* article" in favour of Hyder. Evasion and fraud were the declared basis of the treaty. These *vague* articles, intended for a more vague performance, are the things which have damned our reputation in India.

Hardly was this vague article inserted, than, without waiting for any act on the part of Hyder, Mr. Hastings enters into a negotiation with the Maratta chief, Scindia, for a partition of the territories of the prince who was one of the objects to be secured by the treaty. He was to be parcelled out in three parts—one to Scindia; one to the Peishwa of the Marattas; and the third to the East India company, or to (the old dealer and chapman) Mahomet Ali.

During the formation of this project, Hyder dies; and before his son could take any one step, either to conform to the tenour of the article, or to contravene it, the treaty of partition is renewed on the old footing, and an instruction is sent to Mr. Anderson to conclude it in form.

A circumstance intervened, during the pendency of this negotiation, to set off the good faith of the company with an additional brilliancy, and to make it sparkle and glow with a variety of splendid faces. General Matthews had reduced that most valuable part of Hyder's dominions called the Country of Biddenore. When the news reached Mr. Hastings he instructed Mr. Anderson to contend for an alteration in the treaty of partition, and to take the Biddenore country out of the common stock which was to be divided, and to keep it for the company.

The first ground for this variation was its being a separate conquest made before the treaty had actually taken place. Here was a

new proof given of the fairness, equity, and moderation of the company. But the second of Mr. Hastings's reasons for retaining the Biddenore as a separate portion, and his conduct on that second ground, is still more remarkable. He asserted that that country could not be put into the partition stock, because General Matthews had received it on the terms of some convention, which might be incompatible with the partition proposed. This was a reason in itself both honourable and solid; and it shewed a regard to faith somewhere, and with some persons. But in order to demonstrate his utter contempt of the plighted faith which was alleged on one part as a reason for departing from it on another, and to prove his impetuous desire for sowing a new war, even in the prepared soil of a general pacification, he directs Mr. Anderson, if he should find strong difficulties impeding the partition, on the score of the subtraction of Biddenore, wholly to abandon that claim, and to conclude the treaty on the original terms. General Matthews' convention was just brought forward sufficiently to demonstrate to the Marattas the slippery hold which they had on their new confederate; on the other hand that convention being instantly abandoned, the people of India were taught, that no terms on which they can surrender to the company are to be regarded when farther conquests are in view.

Next, Sir, let me bring before you the pious care that was taken of our allies under that treaty which is the subject of the company's applauses. These allies were Ragonaut Row, for whom we had engaged to find a throne; the Guickwar, (one of the Guzerat princes,) who was to be emancipated from the Maratta authority, and to grow great by several accessions of dominion; and lastly, the rana of Gohud, with whom we had entered into a treaty of partition for eleven-sixteenths of our joint conquests. Some of these inestimable securities, called *vague* articles, were inserted in favour of them all.

As to the first, the unhappy abdicated Peishwa, and pretender to the Maratta throne, Ragonaut Row, was delivered up to his people, with an article for safety, and some provision. This man, knowing how little vague the hatred of his countrymen was towards him, and well apprised of what black crimes he stood accused (among which our invasion of his country would not appear the least) took a mortal alarm at the security we had provided for him. He was thunderstruck at the article in his favour, by which he was surrendered to his enemies. He never had the least notice of the treaty; and it was apprehended that he would fly to the protection of Hyder Ali, or some other, disposed or able to protect him. He was therefore not left without comfort; for Mr. Anderson did him the favour to send a special messenger, desiring him to be of good cheer and to fear nothing. And his old enemy, Scindia, at our request, sent him a message equally well calculated to quiet his apprehensions.

By the same treaty the Guickwar was to come again, with no better security, under the dominion of the Maratta state. As to the rana of Gohud, a long negotiation depended for giving him up. At first this was refused by Mr. Hastings with great indignation; at another stage it was admitted as proper, because he had shewn himself a most perfidious person. But at length a method of reconciling these extremes was found out, by contriving one of the usual articles in his favour. What I believe will appear beyond all belief, Mr. Anderson exchanged the final ratifications of that treaty by which the rana was nominally secured in his possessions, in the camp of the Maratta chief, Scindia, whilst he was (really, and not nominally) battering the castle of Gualior, which we had given, agreeably to treaty, to this deluded ally. Scindia had already reduced the town; and was at the very time, by various detachments, reducing, one after another, the fortresses of our protected ally, as well as in the act of chastising all the rajahs who had assisted colonel Carnac in his invasion. I have seen in a letter from Calcutta, that the rana of Gohud's agent would have represented these hostilities (which went hand in hand with the protecting treaty) to Mr. Hastings; but he was not admitted to his presence.

In this manner the company has acted with their allies in the Maratta war. But they did not rest here; the Marattas were fearful lest the persons delivered to them by that treaty should attempt to escape into the British territories, and thus might elude the punishment intended for them, and by reclaiming the treaty, might stir up new disturbances. To prevent this, they desired an article to be inserted in the supplemental treaty, to which they had the ready consent of Mr. Hastings, and the rest of the company's representatives in Bengal. It was this, "That the English and Maratta governments mutually agree not to afford refuge to any *chiefs*, *merchants*, *or other persons*, flying for protection to the territories of the other." This was readily assented to, and assented to without any exception

whatever, in favour of our surrendered allies. On their part a reciprocity was stipulated which was not unnatural for a government like the company's to ask; a government conscious that many subjects had been, and would in future be, driven to fly from its jurisdiction.

To complete the system of pacific intention and public faith, which predominate in these treaties, Mr. Hastings fairly resolved to put all peace, except on the terms of absolute conquest, wholly out of his own power. For, by an article in this second treaty with Scindia, he binds the company not to make any peace with Tippoo Saheb, without the consent of the peishwa of the Marattas; and binds Scindia to him by a reciprocal engagement. The treaty between France and England obliges us mutually to withdraw our forces, if our allies in India do not accede to the peace within four months; Mr. Hastings's treaty obliges us to continue the war as long as the peishwa thinks fit. We are now in that happy situation, that the breach of the treaty with France, or the violation of that with the Marattas, is inevitable; and we have only to take our choice.

My third assertion, relative to the abuse made of the right of war and peace is, that there are none who have ever confided in us who have not been utterly ruined. The examples I have given of Ragonaut Row, of Guickwar, of the rana of Gohud, are recent. There is proof more than enough in the condition of the mogul; in the slavery and indigence of the nabob of Oude; the exile of the rajah of Benares; the beggary of the nabob of Bengal; the undone and captive condition of the rajah and kingdom of Tanjore; the destruction of the polygars; and lastly, in the destruction of the nabob of Arcot himself, who, when his dominions were invaded, was found entirely destitute of troops, provisions, stores, and (as he asserts) of money, being a million in debt to the company, and four millions to others: the many millions which he had extorted from so many extirpated princes and their desolated countries having (as he has frequently hinted) been expended for the ground rent of his mansion-house in an alley in the suburbs of Madras. Compare the condition of all these princes with the power and authority of all the Maratta states; with the independence and dignity of the Soubah of the Decan; and the mighty strength, the resources, and the manly struggle of Hyder Ali; and then the house will discover the effects on every power in India, of an easy confidence, or of a rooted distrust in the faith of the company.

These are some of my reasons, grounded on the abuse of the external political trust of that body, for thinking myself not only justified, but bound, to declare against those chartered rights which produce so many wrongs. I should deem myself the wickedest of men, if any vote of mine could contribute to the continuance of so great an evil.

Now, Sir, according to the plan I proposed, I shall take notice of the company's internal government, as it is exercised first on the dependent provinces, and then as it affects those under the direct and immediate authority of that body. And here, Sir, before I enter into the spirit of their interiour government, permit me to observe to you, upon a few of the many lines of difference which are to be found between the vices of the company's government, and those of the conquerours who preceded us in India; that we may be enabled a little the better to see our way in an attempt to the necessary reformation.

The several irruptions of Arabs, Tartars, and Persians, into India were, for the greater part, ferocious, bloody, and wasteful in the extreme: our entrance into the dominion of that country, was, as generally, with small comparative effusion of blood; being introduced by various frauds and delusions, and by taking advantage of the incurable, blind, and senseless animosity, which the several country powers bear towards each other, rather than by open force. But the difference in favour of the first conquerours is this; the Asiatic conquerours very soon abated of their ferocity, because they made the conquered country their own. They rose or fell with the rise or fall of the territory they lived in. Fathers there deposited the hopes of their posterity; and children there beheld the monuments of their fathers. Here their lot was finally cast; and it is the natural wish of all, that their lot should not be cast in a bad land. Poverty, sterility, and desolation, are not a recreating prospect to the eye of man; and there are very few who can bear to grow old among the curses of a whole people. If their passion or their avarice drove the Tartar lords to acts of rapacity or tyranny, there was time enough, even in the short life of man, to bring round the ill effects of an abuse of power upon the power itself. If hoards were made by violence and tyranny, they were still domestic hoards; and domestic profusion, or the rapine of a more powerful and prodigal hand, restored them to the people. With many disorders, and with few political checks upon power, nature had still fair play; the sources of acquisition were

not dried up; and therefore the trade, the manufactures, and the commerce of the country flourished. Even avarice and usury itself operated, both for the preservation and the employment of national wealth. The husbandman and manufacturer paid heavy interest, but then they augmented the fund from whence they were again to borrow. Their resources were dearly bought, but they were sure; and the general stock of the community grew by the general effort.

But under the English government all this order is reversed. The Tartar invasion was mischievous; but it is our protection that destroys India. It was their enmity, but it is our friendship. Our conquest there, after twenty years, is as crude as it was the first day. The natives scarcely know what it is to see the grey head of an Englishman. Young men (boys almost) govern there, without society, and without sympathy with the natives. They have no more social habits with the people, than if they still resided in England; nor indeed, any species of intercourse but that which is necessary to making a sudden fortune, with a view to a remote settlement. Animated with all the avarice of age, and all the impetuosity of youth, they roll in one after another; wave after wave; and there is nothing before the eyes of the natives but an endless, hopeless prospect of new flights of birds of prey and passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that is continually wasting. Every rupee of profit made by an Englishman, is lost for ever to India. With us are no retributory superstitions, by which a foundation of charity compensates, through ages, to the poor, for the rapine and injustice of a day. With us, no pride erects stately monuments which repair the mischiefs which pride had produced, and which adorn a country out of its own spoils. England has erected no churches, no hospitals,* no palaces, no schools; England has built no bridges, made no high roads, cut no navigations, dug out no reservoirs. Every other conquerour of every other description has left some monument, either of state or beneficence, behind him. Were we to be driven out of India this day, nothing would remain, to tell that it had been possessed, during the inglorious period of our dominion, by any thing better than the ourang-outang or the tiger.

There is nothing in the boys we send to India worse, than in the boys whom we are whipping at school, or that we see trailing a pike, or bending over a desk at home. But as English youth in India drink the intoxicating draught of authority and dominion before their heads are able to bear it, and as they are full grown in fortune long before they are ripe in principle, neither nature nor reason have any opportunity to exert themselves for remedy of the excesses of their premature power. The consequences of their conduct, which in good minds (and many of theirs are probably such) might produce penitence or amendment, are unable to pursue the rapidity of their flight. Their prey is lodged in England; and the cries of India are given to seas and winds, to be blown about, in every breaking up of the monsoon, over a remote and unhearing ocean. In India, all the vices operate by which sudden fortune is acquired; in England are often displayed by the same persons, the virtues which dispense hereditary wealth. Arrived in England, the destroyers of the nobility and gentry of a whole kingdom will find the best company in this nation, at a board of elegance and hospitality. Here the manufacturer and husbandman will bless the just and punctual hand that in India has torn the cloth from the loom, or wrested the scanty portion of rice and salt from the peasant of Bengal, or wrung from him the very opium in which he forgot his oppressions and his oppressor. They marry into your families they enter into your senate; they ease your estates by loans; they raise their value by demands; they cherish and protect your relations, which lie heavy on your patronage; and there is scarcely an house in the kingdom that does not feel some concern and interest that makes all reform of our eastern government appear officious and disgusting; and on the whole, a most discouraging attempt. In such an attempt you hurt those who are able to return kindness, or to resent injury. If you succeed, you save those who cannot so much as give you thanks. All these things shew the difficulty of the work we have on hand: but they shew its necessity too. Our Indian government is in its best state a grievance. It is necessary that the correctives should be uncommonly vigorous; and the work of men, sanguine, warm, and even impassioned in the cause. But it is an arduous thing to plead against abuses of a power which originates from your own country, and affects those whom we are used to consider as strangers.

I shall certainly endeavour to modulate myself to this temper; though I am sensible that a cold style of describing actions which appear

* The paltry foundation at Calcutta is scarcely worth naming as an exception.

to me in a very affecting light, is equally contrary to the justice due to the people, and to all genuine human feelings about them. I ask pardon of truth and nature for this compliance. But I shall be very sparing of epithets either to persons or things. It has been said (and, with regard to one of them, with truth) that Tacitus and Machiavel, by their cold way of relating enormous crimes, have in some sort appeared not to disapprove them; that they seem a sort of professors of the art of tyranny, and that they corrupt the minds of their readers, by not expressing the detestation and horrour that naturally belong to horrible and detestable proceedings. But we are in general, Sir, so little acquainted with Indian details; the instruments of oppression under which the people suffer are so hard to be understood; and even the very names of the sufferers are so uncouth and strange to our ears, that it is very difficult for our sympathy to fix upon these objects. I am sure that some of us have come down stairs from the committee-room, with impressions on our minds, which to us were the inevitable results of our discoveries, yet if we should venture to express ourselves, in the proper language of our sentiments, to other gentlemen, not at all prepared to enter into the cause of them, nothing could appear more harsh and dissonant, more violent and unaccountable, than our language and behaviour. All these circumstances are not, I confess, very favourable to the idea of our attempting to govern India at all. But there we are; there we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer; and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty.

Upon the plan which I laid down, and to which I beg leave to return, I was considering the conduct of the company to those nations which are indirectly subject to their authority. The most considerable of the dependent princes is the nabob of Oude. My right honourable friend,* to whom we owe the remedial bills on your table, has already pointed out to you, in one of the reports, the condition of that prince, and as it stood in the time he alluded to. I shall only add a few circumstances that may tend to awaken some sense of the manner in which the condition of the people is affected by that of the prince, and involved in it; and to shew you, that when we talk of the sufferings of princes, we do not lament the oppression of individuals; and that in these cases the high and the low suffer together.

In the year 1779, the nabob of Oude represented, through the British resident at his court, that the number of company's troops stationed in his dominions was a main cause of his distress; and that all those which he was not bound by treaty to maintain should be withdrawn, as they had greatly diminished his revenue, and impoverished his country. I will read you, if you please, a few extracts from these representations.

He states, "that the country and cultivation are abandoned; and this year in particular, from the excessive drought of the season, deductions of many lacs having been allowed to the farmers, who are still left unsatisfied;" and then he proceeds with a long detail of his own distress, and that of his family, and all his dependants; and adds, "that the new-raised brigade is not only quite useless to my government, but is moreover the cause of much loss, both in revenues and customs. The detached body of troops under European officers bring nothing *but confusion to the affairs of my government, and are entirely their own masters.*" Mr. Middleton, Mr. Hastings's confidential resident, vouches for the truth of this representation in its fullest extent. "I am concerned to confess, that there is too good ground for this plea. *The misfortune has been general throughout the whole of the vizier's* [the nabob of Oude] *dominions*, obvious to every body; and so *fatal* have been its consequences, that no person of either credit or character, would enter into engagements with government for farming the country." He then proceeds to give strong instances of the general calamity, and its effects.

It was now to be seen what steps the governour-general and council took for the relief of this distressed country, long labouring under the vexations of men, and now stricken by the hand of God. The case of a general famine is known to relax the severity even of the most rigorous government.—Mr. Hastings does not deny, or shew the least doubt of the fact. The representation is humble, and almost abject. On this representation from a great prince of the distress of his subjects, Mr. Hastings falls into a violent passion; such (as it seems) would be unjustifiable in any one who speaks of any part of *his* conduct. He declares, "that the *demands*, the *tone* in which they were asserted, and the *season* in which they were made, are all equally alarming, and appear to him to require an adequate degree of firmness in this board, in *opposition* to them." He proceeds to deal out very unreserved language, on the person and character of the nabob and his ministers. He declares, that in a division between him and the nabob, "*the*

* Mr. Fox.

strongest must decide." With regard to the urgent and instant necessity, from the failure of the crops, he says, "that *perhaps* expedients *may be found* for affording a *gradual* relief from the burthen of which he so heavily complains, and it shall be my endeavour to seek them out:" and lest he should be suspected of too much haste to alleviate sufferings, and to remove violence, he says, "that these must be *gradually* applied, and their complete *effect* may be *distant;* and this I conceive *is all* he can claim of right."

This complete effect of his lenity is distant indeed. Rejecting this demand, (as he calls the nabob's abject supplication,) he attributes it as he usually does all things of the kind, to the division in their government; and says, "this is a powerful motive with *me* (however inclined I might be, *upon any other occasion*, to yield to some *part* of his demand) to give them an *absolute and unconditional refusal* upon the present; and even *to bring to punishment, if my influence can produce that effect, those incendiaries who have endeavoured to make themselves the instruments of division between us.*"

Here, Sir, is much heat and passion; but no more consideration of the distress of the country, from a failure of the means of subsistence, and (if possible) the worse evil of an useless and licentious soldiery, than if they were the most contemptible of all trifles. A letter is written in consequence, in such a style of lofty despotism, as I believe has hitherto been unexampled and unheard-of in the records of the East. The troops were continued. The *gradual* relief, whose effect was to be so *distant*, has *never* been substantially and beneficially applied—and the country is ruined.

Mr. Hastings, two years after, when it was too late, saw the absolute necessity of a removal of the intolerable grievance of this licentious soldiery, which, under pretence of defending it, held the country under military execution. A new treaty and arrangement, according to the pleasure of Mr. Hastings, took place; and this new treaty was broken in the old manner, in every essential article. The soldiery were again sent, and again set loose. The effect of all his manœuvres, from which it seems he was sanguine enough to entertain hopes, upon the state of the country, he himself informs us, "the event has proved the *reverse* of his hopes, and *accumulation of distress, debasement, and dissatisfaction* to the nabob, and *disappointment and disgrace to me.* —Every measure [which he had himself proposed] has been *so conducted* as to give him cause of displeasure; there are no officers established by which his affairs could be regularly conducted; mean, incapable, and indigent men have been appointed. A number of the districts without authority, and without the means of personal protection; some of them have been murdered by the zemindars, and these zemindars, instead of punishment, have been permitted to retain their zemindaries, with independent authority; *all* the other zemindars suffered to rise up in rebellion, and to insult the authority of the sircar, without any attempt made to suppress them; and the company's debt, instead of being discharged by the assignments and extraordinary sources of money provided for that *purpose, is likely to exceed even the amount at which it stood at the time in which the arrangement with his excellency was concluded.*" The house will smile at the resource on which the directors take credit as such a certainty in their curious account.

This is Mr. Hastings's own narrative of the effects of his own settlement. This is the state of the country which we have been told is in perfect peace and order; and, what is curious, he informs us, that *every part of this was foretold to him in the order and manner in which it happened*, at the very time he made his arrangement of men and measures.

The invariable course of the company's policy is this: Either they set up some prince too odious to maintain himself without the necessity of their assistance; or they soon render him odious, by making him the instrument of their government. In that case troops are bountifully sent to him to maintain his authority. That he should have no want of assistance, a civil gentleman, called a resident, is kept at his court, who, under pretence of providing duly for the pay of these troops, gets assignments on the revenue into his hands. Under his provident management, debts soon accumulate; new assignments are made for these debts; until, step by step, the whole revenue, and with it the whole power of the country, is delivered into his hands. The military do not behold without a virtuous emulation the moderate gains of the civil department. They feel that, in a country driven to habitual rebellion by the civil government, the military is necessary; and they will not permit their services to go unrewarded. Tracts of country are delivered over to their discretion. Then it is found proper to convert their commanding officers into farmers of revenue. Thus between the well paid civil, and well rewarded military establishment, the situation of the natives may be easily conjec-

tured. The authority of the regular and lawful government is every where and in every point extinguished. Disorders and violences arise; they are repressed by other disorders and other violences. Wherever the collectors of the revenue, and the farming colonels and majors move, ruin is about them, rebellion before and behind them. The people in crowds fly out of the country; and the frontier is guarded by lines of troops, not to exclude an enemy, but to prevent the escape of the inhabitants.

By these means, in the course of not more than four or five years, this once opulent and flourishing country, which, by the accounts given in the Bengal consultations, yielded more than three score of Sicca rupees, that is, above three millions sterling annually, is reduced, as far as I can discover, in a matter purposely involved in the utmost perplexity, to less than one million three hundred thousand pounds, and that exacted by every mode of rigour that can be devised. To complete the business, most of the wretched remnants of this revenue are mortgaged, and delivered into the hands of the usurers at Benares (for there alone are to be found some lingering remains of the ancient wealth of these regions) at an interest of near *thirty per cent. per annum.*

The revenues in this manner failing, they seized upon the estates of every person of eminence in the country, and under the name of *resumption*, confiscated their property. I wish, Sir, to be understood universally and literally, when I assert, that there is not left one man of property and substance for his rank, in the whole of these provinces, in provinces which are nearly the extent of England and Wales taken together. Not one landholder, not one banker, not one merchant, not one even of those who usually perish last, the *ultimum moriens* in a ruined state, not one farmer of revenue.

One country for a while remained, which stood as an island in the midst of the grand waste of the company's dominion. My right honourable friend, in his admirable speech on moving the bill, just touched the situation, the offences, and the punishment of a native prince, called Fizulla Khân. This man, by policy and force, had protected himself from the general extirpation of the Rohilla chiefs. He was secured (if that were any security) by a treaty. It was stated to you, as it was stated by the enemies of that unfortunate man—"that the whole of his country *is* what the whole country of the Rohillas *was*, cultivated like a garden, without one neglected spot in it."—Another accuser says, "Fyzoolah Khan, though a bad soldier, [that is the true source of his misfortune,] has approved himself a good aumil; having, it is supposed, in the course of a few years, at least *doubled* the population and revenue of his country."—In another part of the correspondence he is charged with making his country an asylum for the oppressed peasants, who fly from the territories of Oude. The improvement of his revenue, arising from this single crime, (which Mr. Hastings considers as tantamount to treason,) is stated at an hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year.

Dr. Swift somewhere says, that he who could make two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, was a greater benefactor to the human race than all the politicians that ever existed. This prince, who would have been deified by antiquity, who would have been ranked with Osiris, and Bacchus, and Ceres, and the divinities most propitious to men, was, for those very merits, by name attacked by the company's government, as a cheat, a robber, a traitor. In the same breath in which he was accused as a rebel, he was ordered at once to furnish 5,000 horse. On delay, or (according to the technical phrase, when any remonstrance is made to them) "*on evasion*," he was declared a violator of treaties, and every thing he had was to be taken from him.—Not one word, however, of horse in this treaty.

The territory of this Fizulla Khân, Mr. Speaker, is less than the county of Norfolk. It is an inland country, full seven hundred miles from any sea-port, and not distinguished for any one considerable branch of manufacture whatsoever. From this territory several very considerable sums had at several times been paid to the British resident. The demand of cavalry, without a shadow or decent pretext of right, amounted to three hundred thousand a year more, at the lowest computation; and it is stated, by the last person sent to negotiate, as a demand of little use, if it could be complied with; but that the compliance was impossible, as it amounted to more than his territories could supply, if there had been no other demand upon him—three hundred thousand pounds a year from an inland country not so large as Norfolk!

The thing most extraordinary was to hear the culprit defend himself from the imputation of his virtues, as if they had been the blackest offences. He extenuated the superiour cultivation of his country. He denied its population. He endeavoured to prove that he had often sent back the poor peasant that sought

shelter with him.—I can make no observation on this.

After a variety of extortions and vexations, too fatiguing to you, too disgusting to me, to go through with, they found "that they ought to be in a better state to warrant forcible means;" they therefore contented themselves with a gross sum of £.150,000 for their present demand. They offered him indeed an idemnity from their exactions in future for three hundred thousand pounds more. But he refused to buy their securities; pleading (probably with truth) his poverty: but if the plea were not founded, in my opinion very wisely; not choosing to deal any more in that dangerous commodity of the company's faith; and thinking it better to oppose distress and unarmed obstinacy to uncoloured exaction, than to subject himself to be considered as a cheat, if he should make a treaty in the least beneficial to himself.

Thus they executed an exemplary punishment on Fizulla Khân for the culture of his country. But, conscious that the prevention of evils is the great object of all good regulation, they deprived him of the means of increasing that criminal cultivation in future, by exhausting his coffers; and, that the population of his country should no more be a standing reproach and libel on the company's government, they bound him, by a positive engagement, not to afford any shelter whatsoever to the farmers and labourers who should seek refuge in his territories, from the exactions of the British residents in Oude. When they had done all this effectually, they gave him a full and complete acquittance from all charges of rebellion, or of any intention to rebel, or of his having originally had any interest in, or any means of rebellion.

These intended rebellions are one of the company's standing resources. When money has been thought to be heaped up any where, its owners are universally accused of rebellion, until they are acquitted of their money and their treasons at once. The money once taken, all accusation, trial, and punishment ends. It is so settled a resource, that I rather wonder how it comes to be omitted in the director's account; but I take it for granted this omission will be supplied in their next edition.

The company stretched this resource to the full extent, when they accused two old women, in the remotest corner of India (who could have no possible view or motive to raise disturbances) of being engaged in rebellion, with an intent to drive out the English nation, in whose protection, purchased by money and secured by treaty, rested the sole hope of their existence. But the company wanted money, and the old women *must* be guilty of a plot. They were accused of rebellion, and they were convicted of wealth. Twice had great sums been extorted from them, and as often had the British faith guaranteed the remainder. A body of British troops, with one of the military farmers general at their head, was sent to seize upon the castle in which these helpless women resided. Their chief eunuchs, who were their agents, their guardians, protectors, persons of high rank according to the Eastern manners, and of great trust, were thrown into dungeons, to make them discover their hidden treasures; and there they lie at present. The lands assigned for the maintenance of the women were seized and confiscated. Their jewels and effects were taken, and set up to a pretended auction in an obscure place, and bought at such a price as the gentlemen thought proper to give. No account has ever been transmitted of the articles or produce of this sale. What money was obtained is unknown, or what terms were stipulated for the maintenance of these despoiled and forlorn creatures; for by some particulars it appears as if an engagement of the kind was made.

Let me here remark, once for all, that though the act of 1773 requires that an account of all proceedings should be diligently transmitted, that this like all the other injunctions of the law, is totally despised; and that half at least of the most important papers are intentionally withheld.

I wish you, Sir, to advert particularly, in this transaction, to the quality and the numbers of the persons spoiled, and the instrument by whom that spoil was made. These ancient matrons called the Begums, or Princesses, were of the first birth and quality in India, the one mother, the other wife, of the late nabob of Oude, Sujah Dowlah, a prince possessed of extensive and flourishing dominions, and the second man in the Mogul empire. This prince (suspicious, and not unjustly suspicious, of his son and successor) at his death committed his treasures and his family to the British faith. That family and household, consisted of *two thousand women;* to which were added two other seraglios of near kindred, and said to be extremely numerous, and (as I am well informed) of about fourscore of the nabob's children, with all the eunuchs, the ancient servants, and a multitude of the dependants of his splendid court. These were all to be provided, for present maintenance and future establishment, from the lands assigned

as dower, and from the treasures which he left to these matrons, in trust for the whole family.

So far as to the objects of the spoil. The *instrument* chosen by Mr. Hastings to despoil the relict of Sujah Dowlah was *her own son*, the reigning nabob of Oude. It was the pious hand of a son that was selected to tear from his mother and grandmother the provision of their age, the maintenance of his brethren, and of all the ancient household of his father. [Here a laugh from some young members]—The laugh is *seasonable*, and the occasion decent and proper.

By the last advices something of the sum extorted remained unpaid. The women in despair refused to deliver more, unless their lands are restored, and their ministers released from prison: but Mr. Hastings and his council, steady to their point, and consistent to the last in their conduct, write to the resident to stimulate the son to accomplish the filial acts he had brought so near to their perfection. "We desire," say they in their letter to the resident, (written so late as March last,) "that you will inform us if any, and what means, have been taken for recovering the balance due from the Begum [Princess] at Fizabad; and that, if necessary, you *recommend* it to the vizier to enforce *the most effectual means* for that purpose."

What their effectual means of enforcing demands on women of high rank and condition are, I shall shew you, Sir, in a few minutes; when I represent to you another of these plots and rebellions, which *always*, in India, though so *rarely* any where else, are the offspring of an easy condition, and hoarded riches.

Benares is the capital city of the Indian religion. It is regarded as holy by a particular and distinguished sanctity; and the Gentoos in general think themselves as much obliged to visit it once in their lives as the Mahometans to perform their pilgrimage to Mecca. By this means that city grew great in commerce and opulence; and so effectually was it secured by the pious veneration of that people, that in all wars and in all violences of power, there was so sure an asylum, both for poverty and wealth, (as it were under a divine protection,) that the wisest laws and best assured free constitution could not better provide for the relief of the one, or the safety of the other; and this tranquillity influenced to the greatest degree the prosperity of all the country, and the territory of which it was the capital. The interest of money there was not more than half the usual rate in which it stood in all other places. The reports have fully informed you of the means and of the terms in which this city and the territory called Gazipour, of which it was the head, came under the sovereignty of the East India Company.

If ever there was a subordinate dominion pleasantly circumstanced to the superiour power, it was this; a large rent or tribute, to the amount of two hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year, was paid in monthly instalments with the punctuality of a dividend at the bank. If ever there was a prince who could not have an interest in disturbances, it was its sovereign, the rajah Cheit Sing. He was in possession of the capital of his religion, and a willing revenue was paid by the devout people who resorted to him from all parts. His sovereignty and his independence, except his tribute, was secured by every tie. His territory was not much less than half of Ireland, and displayed in all parts a degree of cultivation, ease, and plenty, under his frugal and paternal management, which left him nothing to desire, either for honour or satisfaction.

This was the light in which this country appeared to almost every eye. But Mr. Hastings beheld it askance. Mr. Hastings tells us that it was *reported* of this Cheit Sing, that his father left him a million sterling, and that he made annual accessions to the hoard. Nothing could be so obnoxious to indigent power. So much wealth could not be innocent. The house is fully acquainted with the unfounded and unjust requisitions which were made upon this prince. The question has been most ably and conclusively cleared up in one of the reports of the select committee, and in an answer of the court of directors to an extraordinary publication against them by their servant, Mr. Hastings. But I mean to pass by these exactions, as if they were perfectly just and regular; and, having admitted them, I take what I shall now trouble you with, only as it serves to shew the spirit of the company's government, the mode in which it is carried on, and the maxims on which it proceeds.

Mr. Hastings, from whom I take the doctrine, endeavours to prove that Cheit Sing was no sovereign prince; but a mere zemindar or common subject, holding land by rent. If this be granted to him, it is next to be seen under what terms he is of opinion such a landholder, that is a British subject, holds his life and property under the company's government. It is proper to understand well the doctrines of the person whose administration has lately received such distinguished approbation from the company. His doctrine is—"that the

company, or the *person delegated by it*, holds *an absolute* authority over such zemindars;—that he [such a subject] owes *an implicit* and *unreserved* obedience to its authority, at the *forfeiture* even of his *life* and *property*, at the DISCRETION of those who held *or fully represented* the sovereign authority;—and that *these* rights are *fully* delegated *to him* Mr. Hastings."

Such is a British governour's idea of the condition of a great zemindar holding under a British authority; and this kind of authority he supposes fully delegated to *him*; though no such delegation appears in any commission, instruction, or act of parliament. At his *discretion* he may demand, of the substance of any zemindar over and above his rent or tribute, even what he pleases, with a sovereign authority; and if he does not yield an *implicit unreserved* obedience to all his commands, he forfeits his lands, his life, and his property, at Mr. Hastings's *discretion*. But, extravagant, and even frantic as these positions appear, they are less so than what I shall now read to you; for he asserts, that if any one should urge an exemption from more than a stated payment, or should consider the deeds, which passed between him and the board, "as bearing *the quality and force* of a treaty between equal states," he says, "that such an opinion is itself criminal to the state of which he is a subject; and that he was himself amenable to its justice, if he gave *countenance* to such a *belief*." Here is a new species of crime invented, that of countenancing a belief—but a belief of what? A belief of that which the court of directors, Hastings's masters, and a commitee of this house, have decided as this prince's indisputable right.

But supposing the rajah of Benares to be a mere subject, and that subject a criminal of the highest form; let us see what course was taken by an upright English magistrate. Did he cite this culprit before his tribunal? Did he make a charge? Did he produce witnesses? These are not forms; they are parts of substantial and eternal justice. No, not a word of all this, Mr. Hastings concludes him, *in his own mind*, to be guilty; he makes this conclusion on reports, on hearsays, on appearances, on rumours, on conjectures, on presumptions; and even these never once hinted to the party, nor publicly to any human being, till the whole business was done.

But the governour tells you his motive for this extraodinary proceeding, so contrary to every mode of justice towards either a prince or a subject, fairly and without disguise; and he puts into your hands the key of his whole conduct:—"I will suppose, for a moment, that I have acted with unwarrantable rigour towards Cheit Sing, and even with injustice.—Let my MOTIVE be consulted. I left Calcutta, impressed with a belief that *extraordinary means* were necessary, and those exerted with a *steady hand*, to preserve the company's *interests from sinking under the accumulated weight which oppressed them*. I saw a *political necessity* for curbing the *over-grown* power of a great member of their dominion, and *for making it contribute to the relief of their pressing exigencies*." This is plain speaking; after this, it is no wonder that the rajah's wealth and his offence, the necessities of the judge, and the opulence of the delinquent, are never separated, through the whole of Mr. Hastings's apology. "The justice and *policy* of exacting *a large pecuniary mulct*." The resolution "*to draw from his guilt* the means *of relief to the company's distresses*." His determination "to make him *pay largely* for his pardon, or to execute a severe vengeance for past delinquency." That "as his *wealth was great*, and the *company's exigencies* pressing, he thought it a measure of justice and policy to exact from him a large pecuniary mulct for *their relief*." —"The sum (says Mr. Wheler, bearing evidence, at his desire, to his intentions) to which the governour declared his resolution to extend his fine, was forty or fifty lacs, *that is four or five hundred thousand pounds*; and that if he refused, he was to be removed from his zemindary entirely; or by taking possession of his forts, to obtain, *out of the treasure deposited in them*, the above sum for the company."

Crimes so convenient, crimes so politic, crimes so necessary, crimes so alleviating of distress, can never be wanting to those who use no process, and who produce no proofs.

But there is another serious part (what is not so?) in this affair. Let us suppose that the power, for which Mr. Hastings contends, a power which no sovereign ever did, or ever can vest in any of his subjects, namely, his own sovereign authority, to be conveyed by the act of parliament to any man or body of men whatsoever; it certainly was never given to Mr. Hastings. The powers given by the act of 1773 were formal and official; they were given not to the governour general, but to the major vote of the board, as a board, on discussion among themselves, in their public character and capacity; and their acts in that character and capacity were to be ascertained by records and minutes of council. The despotic acts exercised by Mr. Hastings were done merely in his *private* character; and, if

they had been moderate and just, would still be the acts of an usurped authority, and without any one of the legal modes of proceeding which could give him competence for the most trivial exertion of power. There was no proposition or deliberation whatsoever in council, no minute on record, by circulation or otherwise, to authorize his proceedings. No delegation of power to impose a fine, or to take any step to deprive the rajah of Benares of his government, his property, or his liberty. The minutes of consultation assign to his journey a totally different object, duty, and destination. Mr. Wheler, at his desire, tells us long after, that he had a confidential conversation with him on various subjects, of which this was the principal, in which Mr. Hastings notified to him his secret intentions; "and that he *bespoke* his support of the measures which he intended to pursue towards him, (the rajah.)" This confidential discourse, and *bespeaking* of support, could give him no power, in opposition to an express act of parliament, and the whole tenour of the orders of the court of directors.

In what manner the powers thus usurped were employed, is known to the whole world. All the house knows, that the design on the rajah proved as unfruitful as it was violent. The unhappy prince was expelled, and his more unhappy country was enslaved and ruined; but not a rupee was acquired. Instead of a treasure to recruit the company's finances, wasted by their wanton wars and corrupt jobs, they were plunged into a new war which shook their power in India to its foundation; and, to use the governour's own happy simile, might have dissolved it like a magic structure, if the talisman had been broken.

But the success is no part of my consideration, who should think just the same of this business, if the spoil of one rajah had been fully acquired, and faithfully applied to the destruction of twenty other rajahs. Not only the arrest of the rajah in his palace was unnecessary and unwarrantable, and calculated to stir up any manly blood which remained in his subjects; but the despotic style, and the extreme incolence of language and demeanour, used to a person of great condition among the politest people in the world, was intolerable. Nothing aggravates tyranny so much as contumely. *Quicquid superbia in contumeliis* was charged by a great man of antiquity, as a principal head of offence against the governour general of that day. The unhappy people were still more insulted. A relation, but an *enemy* to the family, a notorious robber and villain, called Ussum Sing, kept as a hawk in a mew, to fly upon this nation, was set up to govern there, instead of a prince honoured and beloved. But when the business of insult was accomplished, the revenue was too serious a concern to be entrusted to such hands. Another was set up in his place, as guardian to an infant.

But here, Sir, mark the effect of all these *extraordinary* means, of all this policy and justice. The revenues which had been hitherto paid with such astonishing punctuality, fell into arrear. The new prince guardian was deposed without ceremony; and with as little, cast into prison. The government of that once happy country has been in the utmost confusion ever since such good order was taken about it. But, to complete the contumely offered to this undone people, and to make them feel their servitude in all its degradation, and all its bitterness, the government of their sacred city, the government of that Benares which had been so respected by Persian and Tartar conquerours, though of the Mussulman persuasion, that, even in the plenitude of their pride, power and bigotry, no magistrate of that sect entered the place, was now delivered over by English hands to a Mahometan; and an Ali Ibrahim Khan was introduced, under the company's authority, with power of life and death, into the sanctuary of the Gentoo religion.

After this, the taking off a slight payment, cheerfully made by pilgrims to a chief of their own rites, was represented as a mighty benefit. It remains only to shew, through the conduct in this business, the spirit of the company's government, and the respect they pay towards other prejudices not less regarded in the east than those of religion; I mean the reverence paid to the female sex in general, and particularly to women of high rank and condition. During the general confusion of the country of Gazypore, Panna, the mother of Cheit Sing, was lodged with her train in a castle called Bidge Gur, in which were likewise deposited a large portion of the treasures of her son, or more probably her own. To whomsoever they belonged was indifferent; for though no charge of rebellion was made on this woman (which was rather singular, as it would have cost nothing) they were resolved to secure her with her fortune. The castle was besieged by Major Popham.

There was no great reason to apprehend that soldiers ill paid, that soldiers who thought they had been defrauded of their plunder on former services of the same kind, would not

have been sufficiently attentive to the spoil they were expressly come for; but the gallantry and generosity of the profession was justly suspected, as being likely to set bounds to military rapaciousness. The company's first civil magistrate discovered the greatest uneasiness lest the women should have any thing preserved to them. Terms, tending to put some restraint on military violence, were granted. He writes a letter to Mr. Popham, referring to some letter written before to the same effect, which I do not remember to have seen; but it shews his anxiety on this subject. Hear himself:—"I think *every* demand she has made on you, except that of safety and respect to her person, is unreasonable. If the reports brought to me are true, your rejecting her offers, or *any negotiation*, would soon obtain you the fort upon your own terms. I apprehend she will attempt to *defraud the captors of a considerable part of their booty, by being suffered to retire without examination*. But this is your concern, not mine. I should *be very sorry* that your officers and soldiers lost *any* part of the reward to which they are so well entitled; but you must be the best judge of the *promised* indulgence to the ranny: what you have engaged for I will certainly ratify; but as to suffering the ranny to hold the purgunna of Hurlich, or any other zemindary, without being subject to the authority of the zemindar, *or any lands whatsoever*, or indeed making *any* condition with her for a *provision*, I will *never consent*."

Here your governour stimulates a rapacious and licentious soldiery to the personal search of women, lest these unhappy creatures should avail themselves of the protection of their sex to secure any supply for their necessities; and he positively orders that no stipulation should be made for any provision for them. The widow and mother of a prince, well informed of her miserable situation, and the cause of it, a woman of this rank became a suppliant to the domestic servant of Mr. Hastings, (they are his own words that I read;) "imploring his intercession, that she may be relieved *from the hardships and dangers of her present situation*; and offering to surrender the fort, and the *treasure and valuable effects contained* in it, provided she can be assured *of safety and protection to her person and honour*, and to that of her family and attendants." He is so good as to consent to this, provided she surrenders every thing of value, with the reserve *only* of such articles as *you* shall think *necessary* to her condition, or as you *yourself* shall be disposed to indulge her with.—But should she refuse to execute the promise she has made, or delay it beyond the term of twenty-four hours it is *my positive* injunction, that you immediately put a stop to any further intercourse or negotiation with her, and on no pretext renew it. If she disappoints or *trifles* with me, *after* I have subjected *my duan* to the disgrace of returning ineffectually, and of course myself to discredit, I shall consider it as a *wanton* affront and indignity *which I can never forgive*; nor will I grant her *any* conditions whatever, but leave her exposed *to those* dangers which she has chosen to risk, rather than trust to the clemency and generosity of our government. I think she cannot be ignorant of these consequences, and will not venture to incur them; and it is for this reason I place a dependance on her offers, and have consented to send my duan to her." The dreadful secret hinted at by the merciful governour in the latter part of the letter, is well understood in India; where those who suffer corporeal indignities, generally expiate the offences of others with their own blood. However, in spite of all these, the temper of the military did, some way or other, operate. They came to terms which have never been transmitted. It appears that a fifteenth *per cent.* of the plunder was reserved to the captives, of which the unhappy mother of the prince of Benares was to have a share. This ancient matron, born to better things [a laugh from certain young gentlemen]—I see no cause for this mirth. A good author of antiquity reckons among the calamities of his time. *Nobilissimarum feminarum exilia et fugas.* I say, Sir, this ancient lady was compelled to quit her house with three hundred helpless women, and a multitude of children in her train; but the lower sort in the camp it seems could not be restrained. They did not forget the good lessons of the governour general. They were unwilling "to be defrauded of a considerable part of their booty, by suffering them to pass without examination."—They examined them, Sir, with a vengeance, and the sacred protection of that awful character, Mr. Hastings's maitre d'hotel, could not secure them from insult and plunder. Here is Popham's narrative of the affair:—"The ranny came out of the fort, with her family and dependants, the 10th at night, owing to which such attention was not paid to her as I wished; and I am exceedingly sorry to inform you, that the *licentiousness of our followers was beyond the bounds of controul; for, notwithstanding all I could do, her people were plundered on the road of most of the things which they brought out of the fort, by which means one of the articles of surrender has been much infringed.* The

distress I have felt upon this occasion cannot be expressed, and can only be allayed by a firm performance of the other articles of the treaty, which I shall make it my business to enforce.

"The suspicions which the officers had of treachery, and the delay made to our getting possession, had enraged them, as well as the troops, so much, that the treaty was at first regarded as void, but this determination was soon succeeded by pity and compassion for the unfortunate besieged."—After this comes, in his due order, Mr. Hastings; who is full of sorrow and indignation, &c. &c. &c. according to the best and most authentic precedents established upon such occasions.

The women being thus disposed of, that is, completely despoiled, and pathetically lamented, Mr. Hastings at length recollected the great object of his enterprise, which, during his zeal lest the officers and soldiers should lose any part of their reward, he seems to have forgot; that is to say, "to draw from the rajah's guilt the means of relief to the company's distresses." This was to be the strong hold of his defence. This compassion to the company, he knew by experience would sanctify a great deal of rigour towards the natives. But the military had distresses of their own, which they considered first. Neither Mr. Hastings's authority, nor his supplications, could prevail on them to assign a shilling to the claim he made on the part of the company. They divided the booty among themselves. Driven from his claim, he was reduced to petition for the spoil as a loan. But the soldiers were too wise to venture as a loan, what the borrower claimed as a right. In defiance of all authority, they shared among themselves about two hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides what had been taken from the women.

In all this there is nothing wonderful. We may rest assured, that when the maxims of any government establish among its resources extraordinary means, and those exerted with a strong hand, that strong hand will provide those extraordinary means for *itself*. Whether the soldiers had reason or not (perhaps much might be said for them) certain it is, the military discipline of India was ruined from that moment; and the same rage for plunder, the same contempt of subordination, which blasted all the hopes of extraordinary means from your strong hand at Benares, have very lately lost you an army in Mysore. This is visible enough from the accounts in the last Gazette.

There is no doubt but that the country and city of Benares, now brought into the same order, will very soon exhibit, if it does not already display, the same appearances with those countries and cities which are under better subjection. A great master, Mr. Hastings, has himself been at the pains of drawing a picture of one of these countries, I mean the province and city of Farruckabad. There is no reason to question his knowledge of the facts; and his authority (on this point at least) is above all exception, as well for the state of the country as for the cause. In his minute of consultation, Mr. Hastings describes forcibly the consequences which arise from the degradation into which we have sunk the native government. "The total want (says he) of all order, regularity, or authority, in his (the nabob of Farruckabad's) government, and to which, among other obvious causes, it may no doubt be owing that the country of Farruckabad is become *almost an entire waste, without cultivation or inhabitants*; that the capital, which, but a very short time ago, was distinguished as one of the most populous and opulent commercial cities in Hindostan, at present exhibits nothing but *scenes of the most wretched poverty, desolation, and misery*; and that the *nabob himself*, though in the possession of a tract of country which, with only common care, is notoriously capable of yielding an annual revenue of between thirty and forty lacs, (three or four hundred thousand pounds,) with *no military establishment* to maintain, scarcely commands *the means of a bare subsistence*.

This is a true and unexaggerated picture, not only of Farruckabad, but of at least three fourths of the country which we possess, or rather lay waste, in India. Now, Sir, the house will be desirous to know for what purpose this picture was drawn. It was for a purpose, I will not say laudable, but necessary, that of taking the unfortunate prince and his country out of the hands of a sequestrator sent thither by the nabob of Oude, the mortal enemy of the prince thus ruined, and to protect him by means of a British resident, who might carry his complaints to the superiour resident at Oude, or transmit them to Calcutta. But mark how the reformer persisted in his reformation. The effect of the measure was better than was probably expected. The prince began to be at ease; the country began to recover; and the revenue began to be collected. These were alarming circumstances. Mr. Hastings not only recalled the resident, but he entered into a formal stipulation with the nabob of Oude, never to send an English subject again to Farruckabad; and thus the country, described as you have heard by Mr. Hastings, is given up for ever to the very persons to whom

he had attributed its ruin, that is, to the Sezawals or sequestrators of the nabob of Oude.

Such was the issue of the first attempt to relieve the distresses of the dependent provinces. I shall close what I have to say on the condition of the northern dependencies, with the effect of the last of these attempts. You will recollect, Sir, the account I have not long ago stated to you as given by Mr. Hastings, of the ruined condition of the destroyer of others, the nabob of Oude, and of the recall, in consequence, of Hannay, Middleton, and Johnson. When the first little sudden gust of passion against these gentlemen was spent, the sentiments of old friendship began to revive. Some healing conferences were held between them and the superiour government. Mr. Hannay was permitted to return to Oude; but death prevented the further advantages intended for him, and the future benefits proposed for the country by the provident care of the council general.

One of these gentlemen was accused of the grossest peculations. Two of them by Mr. Hastings himself, of what he considered as very gross offences. The court of directors were informed, by the governour-general and council, that a severe inquiry would be instituted against the two survivors; and they requested that court to suspend its judgment, and to wait the event of their proceedings. A mock inquiry has been instituted, by which the parties could not be said to be either acquitted or condemned. By means of the bland and conciliatory dispositions of the charter governours, and proper private explanations, the public inquiry has in effect died away; the supposed peculators and destroyers of Oude repose in all security in the bosoms of their accusers; whilst others succeed to them to be instructed by their example.

It is only to complete the view I proposed of the conduct of the company, with regard to the dependent provinces, that I shall say *any* thing at all of the Carnatic, which in the scene, if possible, of greater disorder than the northern provinces. Perhaps it were better to say of this centre and metropolis of abuse, whence all the rest in India and in England diverge; from whence they are fed and methodized, what was said of Carthage—*de Carthagine satius est silere quam parum dicere.* This country, in all its denominations, is about 46,000 square miles. It may be affirmed universally, that not one person of substance or property, landed, commercial or monied, excepting two or three bankers, who are necessary deposits and distributors of the general spoil, is left in all that region. In that country, the moisture, the bounty of Heaven, is given but at a certain season. Before the æra of our influence, the industry of man carefully husbanded that gift of God. The Gentoos preserved, with a provident and religious care, the precious deposit of the periodical rain in reservoirs, many of them works of royal grandeur; and from these, as occasion demanded, they fructified the whole country. To maintain these reservoirs, and to keep up an annual advance to the cultivators, for seed and cattle, formed a principal object of the piety and policy of the priests and rulers of the Gentoo religion.

This object required a command of money; and there was no pollam, or castle, which in the happy days of the Carnatic was without some hoard of treasure, by which the governours were enabled to combat with the irregularity of the seasons, and to resist or to buy off the invasion of an enemy. In all the cities were multitudes of merchants and bankers, for all occasions of monied assistance; and on the other hand, the native princes were in condition to obtain credit from them. The manufacturer was paid by the return of commodities, or by imported money, and not, as at present, in the taxes that had been originally exacted from his industry. In aid of casual distress, the country was full of choultries, which were inns and hospitals, where the traveller and the poor were relieved. All ranks of people had their place in the public concern, and their share in the common stock and common prosperity; but *the chartered rights of men*, and the right which it was thought proper to set up in the nabob of Arcot, introduced a new system. It was their policy to consider hoards of money as crimes; to regard moderate rents as frauds on the sovereign; and to view, in the lesser princes, any claim of exemption from more than settled tribute, as an act of rebellion. Accordingly all the castles were, one after the other, plundered and destroyed. The native princes were expelled; the hospitals fell to ruin; the reservoirs of water went to decay; the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers disappeared; and sterility, indigence, and depopulation, overspread the face of these once flourishing provinces.

The company was very early sensible of these mischiefs, and of their true cause. They gave precise orders "that the native princes, called polygars, should *not be extirpated*."—"The rebellion [so they choose to call it] of the polygars, may (they fear) *with too much justice*, be attributed to the maladministration of the nabob's collectors:"—They observe with con-

cers, that their "troops have been put to *disagreeable* services." They might have used a stronger expression without impropriety. But they make amends in another place. Speaking of the polygars, the directors say, that "it was repugnant to humanity to *force* them to such dreadful extremities *as they underwent*:" That some examples of severity *might* be necessary, "when they fell into the nabob's hands," *and not by the destruction of the country*: "That *they fear* his government is *none of the mildest*; and that there is *great oppression* in collecting his revenues." They state, that the wars in which he has involved the Carnatic, had been a cause of its distresses: "that these distresses have been certainly great; but those by *the nabob's oppressions* they believe *to be greater than all*." Pray, Sir, attend to the reason for their opinion that the government of this their instrument is more calamitous to the country than the ravages of war.—Because, say they, his oppressions are "*without intermission*.—The other are temporary; by all which *oppressions* we believe the nabob has great wealth in store." From this store neither he nor they could derive any advantage whatsoever upon the invasion of Hyder Ali in the hour of their greatest calamity and dismay.

It is now proper to compare these declarations with the company's conduct. The principal reason which they assigned against the *extirpation* of the polygars was, that the *weavers* were protected in their fortresses. They might have added, that the company itself, which stung them to death, had been warmed in the bosom of these unfortunate princes: for, on the taking of Madras by the French, it was in their hospitable pollams, that most of the inhabitants found refuge and protection. But, notwithstanding all these orders, reasons, and declarations, they at length gave an indirect sanction, and permitted the use of a very direct and irresistible force, to measures which they had, over and over again, declared to be false policy, cruel, inhuman, and oppressive. Having, however, forgot all attention to the princes and the people, they remembered that they had some sort of interest in the trade of the country; and it is matter of curiosity to observe the protection which they afforded to this their natural object.

Full of anxious cares on this head, they direct, "that in reducing the polygars they (their servants) were to be *cautious*, not to deprive the *weavers and manufacturers* of the protection they often met with in the strong holds of the polygar countries;"—and they write to their instrument, the nabob of Arcot, concerning these poor people in a most pathetic strain. "We *entreat* your excellency (say they) in particular, to make the manufacturers the object of your *tenderest care*; particularly when you *root out* the polygars, you do not deprive the *weavers of the protection they enjoyed under them*." When they root out the protectors in favour of the oppressor, they shew themselves religiously cautious of the rights of the protected. When they extirpate the shepherd and the shepherd's dog, they piously recommend the helpless flock to the mercy, and even to the *tenderest care*, of the wolf. This is the uniform strain of their policy, strictly forbidding, and at the same time strenuously encouraging and enforcing, every measure that can ruin and desolate the country committed to their charge. After giving the company's idea of the government of this their instrument, it may appear singular, but it is perfectly consistent with their system, that, besides wasting for him, at two different times, the most exquisite spot upon the earth, Tanjore, and all the adjacent countries, they have even voluntarily put their own territory, that is, a large and fine country adjacent to Madras, called their jaghire, wholly out of their protection; and have continued to farm their subjects, and their duties towards these subjects, to that very nabob, whom they themselves constantly represent as an habitual oppressor, and a relentless tyrant. This they have done without any pretence of ignorance of the objects of oppression for which this prince has thought fit to become their renter; for he has again and again told them, that it is for the sole purpose of exercising authority he holds the jaghire lands; and he affirms (and I believe with truth) that he pays more for that territory than the revenues yield. This deficiency he must make up from his other territories; and thus, in order to furnish the means of oppressing one part of the Carnatic, he is led to oppress all the rest.

The house perceives that the livery of the company's government is uniform. I have described the condition of the countries indirectly, but most substantially, under the company's authority. And now I ask, whether, with this map of misgovernment before me, I can suppose myself bound by my vote to continue, upon any principles of pretended public faith, the management of these countries in those hands? If I kept such a faith (which in reality is no better than a *fides latronum*) with what is called the company, I must break the faith, the covenant, the solemn, original,

indispensable oath, in which I am bound, by the eternal frame and constitution of things, to the whole human race.

As I have dwelt so long on those who are indirectly under the company's administration, I will endeavour to be a little shorter upon the countries immediately under this charter government.—These are the Bengal provinces. The condition of these provinces is pretty fully detailed in the sixth and ninth reports, and in their appendixes. I will select only such principles and instances as are broad and general. To your own thoughts I shall leave it, to furnish the detail of oppressions involved in them. I shall state to you, as shortly as I am able, the conduct of the company;—1st, towards the landed interests;—next, the commercial interests;—3dly, the native government;—and lastly, to their own government.

Bengal, and the provinces that are united to it, are larger than the kingdom of France; and once contained, as France does contain, a great and independent landed interest, composed of princes, of great lords, of a numerous nobility and gentry, of freeholders, of lower tenants, of religious communities, and public foundations. So early as 1769, the company's servants perceived the decay into which these provinces had fallen under English administration, and they made a strong representation upon this decay, and what they apprehended to be the causes of it. Soon after this representation, Mr. Hastings became president of Bengal. Instead of administering a remedy to this melancholy disorder, upon the heels of a dreadful famine, in the year 1772, the succour which the new president and the council lent to this afflicted nation was—shall I be believed in relating it?—the landed interest of a whole kingdom, of a kingdom to be compared to France, was set up to public auction! They set up (Mr. Hastings set up) the whole nobility, gentry, and freeholders, to the highest bidder. No preference was given to the ancient proprietors. They must bid against every usurer, every temporary adventurer, every jobber and schemer, every servant of every European, or they were obliged to content themselves, in lieu of their extensive domains, with their house, and such a pension as the state auctioneers thought fit to assign. In this general calamity, several of the first nobility thought (and in all appearance justly) that they had better submit to the necessity of this pension, than continue, under the name of zemindars, the objects and instruments of a system, by which they ruined their tenants, and were ruined themselves. Another reform has since come upon the back of the first; and a pension having been assigned to these unhappy persons, in lieu of their hereditary lands, a new scheme of œconomy has taken place, and deprived them of that pension.

The menial servants of Englishmen, persons (to use the emphatical phrase of a ruined and patient eastern chief) "*whose fathers they would not have set with the dogs of their flock,*" entered into their patrimonial lands. Mr. Hastings's banian was, after this auction, found possessed of territories yielding a rent of one hundred and forty thousand pounds a year.

Such an universal proscription, upon any pretence, has few examples. Such a proscription, without even a pretence of delinquency, has none. It stands by itself. It stands as a monument to astonish the imagination, to confound the reason of mankind. I confess to you, when I first came to know this business in its true nature and extent, my surprise did a little suspend my indignation. I was in a manner stupified by the desperate boldness of a few obscure young men, who, having obtained, by ways which they could not comprehend, a power of which they saw neither the purposes nor the limits, tossed about, subverted, and tore to pieces, as if it were in the gambols of a boyish unluckiness and malice, the most established rights, and the most ancient and most revered institutions, of ages and nations. Sir, I will not now trouble you with any detail with regard to what they have since done with these same lands and land-holders; only to inform you, that nothing has been suffered to settle for two seasons together upon any basis; and that the levity and inconstancy of these mock legislators were not the least afflicting parts of the oppressions suffered under their usurpation; nor will any thing give stability to the property of the natives, but an administration in England at once protecting and stable. The country sustains, almost every year, the miseries of a revolution. At present, all is uncertainty, misery, and confusion. There is to be found through these vast regions no longer one landed man, who is a resource for voluntary aid, or an object for particular rapine. Some of them were, not long since, great princes; they possessed treasures, they levied armies. There was a zemindar in Bengal (I forget his name) that, on the threat of an invasion, supplied the soubah of these provinces with the loan of a million sterling. The family at this day wants credit for a breakfast at the bazaar.

I shall now say a word or two on the company's care of the commercial interest of these kingdoms. As it appears in the reports, that

persons in the highest stations in Bengal have adopted, as a fixed plan of policy, the destruction of all intermediate dealers between the company and the manufacturer, native merchants have disappeared of course. The spoil of the revenues is the sole capital which purchases the produce and manufactures; and through three or four foreign companies transmits the official gains of individuals to Europe. No other commerce has an existence in Bengal. The transport of its plunder is the only traffic of the country. I wish to refer you to the appendix to the ninth report for a full account of the manner in which the company have protected the commercial interests of their dominions in the east.

As to the native government and the administration of justice, it subsisted in a poor tottering manner for some years. In the year 1781, a total revolution took place in that establishment. In one of the usual freaks of legislation of the council of Bengal, the whole criminal jurisdiction of these courts, called the Phoujdary Judicature, exercised till then by the principal Mussulmen, was in one day, without notice, without consultation with the magistrates or the people there, and without communication with the directors or ministers here, totally subverted. A new institution took place, by which this jurisdiction was divided between certain English servants of the company and the Gentoo zemindars of the country, the latter of whom never petitioned for it, nor, for aught that appears, ever desired this boon. But its natural use was made of it; it was made a pretence for new extortions of money.

The natives had however one consolation in the ruin of their judicature; they soon saw that it fared no better with the English government itself. That too, after destroying every other, came to its period. This revolution may well be rated for a most daring act, even among the extraordinary things that have been doing in Bengal since our unhappy acquisition of the means of so much mischief.

An establishment of English government for civil justice, and for the collection of revenue, was planned and executed by the president and council of Bengal, subject to the pleasure of the directors, in the year 1772. According to this plan, the country was divided into six districts, or provinces. In each of these was established a provincial council, which administered the revenue; and of that council one member by monthly rotation, presided in the courts of civil resort; with an appeal to the council of the province, and thence to Calcutta. In this system (whether, in other respects, good or evil) there were some capital advantages. There was in the very number of persons in each provincial council, authority, communication, mutual check, and controul. They were obliged, on their minutes of consultation, to enter their reasons and dissents; so that a man of diligence, of research, and tolerable sagacity, sitting in London, might, from these materials, be enabled to form some judgment of the spirit of what was going on on the furthest banks of the Ganges and Burrampooter.

The court of directors so far ratified this establisment, (which was consonant enough to their general plan of government,) that they gave precise orders, that no alteration should be made in it, without their consent. So far from being apprised of any design against this constitution, they had reason to conceive that on trial it had been more and more approved by their council general, at least by the governour general, who had planned it. At the time of the revolution, the council general was nominally in two persons, virtually in one. At that time measures of an arduous and critical nature ought to have been forborne, even if, to the fullest council, this specific measure had not been prohibited by the superiour authority. It was in this very situation, that one man had the hardiness to conceive, and the temerity to execute, a total revolution in the form and the persons composing the government of a great kingdom. Without any previous step, at one stroke, the whole constitution of Bengal, civil and criminal, was swept away. The counsellors were recalled from their provinces. Upwards of fifty of the principal officers of government were turned out of employ, and rendered dependent on Mr. Hastings for their immediate subsistence, and for all hope of future provision. The chief of each council, and one European collector of revenue, was left in each province.

But here, Sir, you may imagine a new government, of some permanent description, was established in the place of that which had been thus suddenly overturned. No such thing. Lest these chiefs without councils should be conceived to form the ground plan of some future government, it was publicly declared that their continuance was only temporary and permissive. The whole subordinate British administration of revenue was then vested in a committee in Calcutta, all creatures of the governour general; and the provincial management, under the permissive chief, was delivered over to native officers.

But, that the revolution, and the purposes of the revolution might be complete, to this com

mittee were delegated, not only the functions of all the inferiour, but, what will surprise the house, those of the supreme administration of revenue also. Hitherto the governour general and council had, in their revenue department, administered the finances of those kingdoms. By the new scheme, they are delegated to this committee, who are only to report their proceedings for approbation.

The key to the whole transaction is given in one of the instructions to the committee, "that it is not necessary that they should enter dissents." By this means the ancient plan of the company's administration was destroyed; but the plan of concealment was perfected. To that moment the accounts of the revenues were tolerably clear; or at least means were furnished for inquiries, by which they might be rendered satisfactory. In the obscure and silent gulph of this committee every thing is now buried. The thickest shades of night surround all their transactions. No effectual means of detecting fraud, mismanagement, or misrepresentation, exist. The directors, who have dared to talk with such confidence on their revenues, know nothing about them. What used to fill volumes, is now comprised under a few dry heads on a sheet of paper. The natives, a people habitually made to concealment, are the chief managers of the revenue throughout the provinces. I mean by natives, such wretches as your rulers select out of them as most fitted for their purposes. As a proper key-stone to bind the arch, a native, one Gunga Govind Sing, a man turned out of his employment by Sir John Clavering, for malversation in office, is made the corresponding secretary; and indeed the great moving principle of their new board.

As the whole revenue and civil administration was thus subverted, and a clandestine government substituted in the place of it, the judicial institution underwent a like revolution. In 1772 there had been six courts formed out of the six provincial councils. Eighteen new ones are appointed in their place, with each a judge, taken from the *junior* servants of the country. To maintain these eighteen courts, a tax is levied on the sums in litigation, of 2½ *per cent.* on the great, and of 5 *per cent.* on the less. This money is all drawn from the provinces to Calcutta. The chief justice (the same who stays in defiance of a vote of this house, and of his majesty's recall) is appointed at once the treasurer and disposer of these taxes, levied, without any sort of authority, from the company, from the crown, or from parliament.

In effect, Sir, every legal regular authority in matters of revenue, of political administration, of criminal law, of civil law, in many of the most essential parts of military discipline, is laid level with the ground; and an oppressive, irregular, capricious, unsteady, rapacious, and peculating despotism, with a direct disavowal of obedience to any authority at home, and without any fixed maxim, principle, or rule of proceeding, to guide them in India, is at present the state of your charter-government over great kingdoms.

As the company has made this use of their trust, I should ill discharge mine, if I refused to give my most cheerful vote for the redress of these abuses, by putting the affairs of so large and valuable a part of the interests of this nation, and of mankind, into some steady hands, possessing the confidence, and assured of the support of this house, until they can be restored to regularity, order, and consistency.

I have touched the heads of some of the grievances of the people, and the abuses of government. But I hope and trust, you will give me credit, when I faithfully assure you, that I have not mentioned one-fourth part of what has come to my knowledge in your committee; and further, I have full reason to believe, that not one-fourth part of the abuses are come to my knowledge, by that or by any other means. Pray consider what I have said only as an index to direct you in your inquiries.

If this then, Sir, has been the use made of the trust of political powers internal and external, given by you in the charter, the next thing to be seen is the conduct of the company with regard to the commercial trust. And here I will make a fair offer:—If it can be proved that they have acted wisely, prudently, and frugally, as merchants, I shall pass by the whole mass of their enormities as statesmen. That they have not done this their present condition is proof sufficient. Their distresses are said to be owing to their wars. This is not wholly true. But if it were, is not that readiness to engage in wars which distinguishes them, and for which the committee of secrecy has so branded their politics, founded on the falsest principles of mercantile speculation.

The principle of buying cheap and selling dear is the first, the great foundation of mercantile dealing. Have they ever attended to this principle? Nay, for years have they not actually authorized in their servants a total indifference as to the prices they were to pay?

A great deal of strictness in driving bargains for whatever we contract, is another of the principles of mercantile policy. Try the

company by that test! Look at the contracts that are made for them. Is the company so much as a good commissary to their own armies? I engage to select for you, out of the innumerable mass of their dealings, all conducted very nearly alike, one contract only, the excessive profits on which during a short term would pay the whole of their year's dividend. I shall undertake to shew, that upon two others, the inordinate profits given, with the losses incurred in order to secure those profits, would pay a year's dividend more.

It is a third property of trading men to see that their clerks do not divert the dealings of the master to their own benefit. It was the other day only, when their governour and council taxed the company's investment with a sum of fifty thousand pounds, as an inducement to persuade only seven members of their board of trade to give their *honour* that they would abstain from such profits upon that investment as they must have violated their *oaths* if they had made at all.

It is a fourth quality of a merchant to be exact in his accounts. What will be thought, when you have fully before you the mode of accounting made use of in the treasury of Bengal?—I hope you will have it soon. With regard to one of their agencies, when it came to the material part, the prime cost of the goods on which a commission of fifteen *per cent.* was allowed, to the astonishment of the factory to whom the commodities were sent, the accountant general reports that he did not think himself authorized to call for *vouchers* relative to this and other particulars,—because the agent was upon his *honour* with regard to them. A new principle of account upon honour seems to be regularly established in their dealings and their treasury, which in reality amounts to an entire annihilation of the principle of all accounts.

It is a fifth property of a merchant who does not meditate a fraudulent bankruptcy, to calculate his probable profits upon the money he takes up to vest in business. Did the company, when they bought goods on bonds bearing 8 *per cent.* interest, at ten and even twenty *per cent.* discount, even ask themselves a question concerning the possibility of advantage from dealing on these terms?

The last quality of a merchant I shall advert to, is the taking care to be properly prepared, in cash or goods, in the ordinary course of sale, for the bills which are drawn on them. Now I ask, whether they have ever calculated the clear produce of any given sales, to make them tally with the four millions of bills which are come and coming upon them, so as at the proper periods to enable the one to liquidate the other? No, they have not. They are now obliged to borrow money of their own servants to purchase their investment. The servants stipulate five *per cent.* on the capital they advance, if their bills should not be paid at the time when they become due; and the value of the rupee on which they charge this interest is taken at two shillings and a penny. Has the company ever troubled themselves to enquire whether their sales can bear the payment of that interest, and at that rate of exchange? Have they once considered the dilemma in which they are placed—the ruin of their credit in the East Indies, if they refuse the bills—the ruin of their credit and existence in England, if they accept them? Indeed no trace of equitable government is found in their politics; not one trace of commercial principle in their mercantile dealing; and hence is the deepest and maturest wisdom of parliament demanded, and the best resources of this kingdom must be strained, to restore them; that is, to restore the countries destroyed by the misconduct of the company, and to restore the company itself, ruined by the consequences of their plans for destroying what they were bound to preserve.

I required, if you remember, at my outset, a proof that these abuses were habitual. But surely this is not necessary for me to consider as a separate head; because I trust I have made it evident beyond a doubt, in considering the abuses themselves, that they are regular, permanent and systematical.

I am now come to my last condition, without which, for one, I will never readily lend my hand to the destruction of any established government; which is, That in its present state, the government of the East India company is absolutely incorrigible.

Of this great truth I think there can be little doubt, after all that has appeared in this house. It is so very clear, that I must consider the leaving any power in their hands, and the determined resolution to continue and countenance every mode and every degree of peculation, oppression and tyranny, to be one and the same thing. I look upon that body incorrigible, from the fullest consideration both of their uniform conduct, and their present real and virtual constitution.

If they had not constantly been apprised of all the enormities committed in India under their authority; if this state of things had been as much a discovery to them as it was to many of us; we might flatter ourselves that the detection of the abuses would lead to their refor-

mation. I will go further: If the court of directors had not uniformly condemned every act which this house or any of its committees had condemned; if the language in which they expressed their disapprobation against enormities and their authors had not been much more vehement and indignant than any ever used in this house, I should entertain some hopes. If they had not on the other hand, as uniformly commended all their servants who had done their duty and obeyed their orders, as they had heavily censured those who rebelled; I might say, These people have been in an errour, and when they are sensible of it they will mend. But when I reflect on the uniformity of their support to the objects of their uniform censure; and the state of insignificance and disgrace to which all of those have been reduced whom they approved; and that even utter ruin and premature death have been among the fruits of their favour; I must be convinced, that in this case, as in all others, hypocrisy is the only vice that never can be cured.

Attend, I pray you, to the situation and prosperity of Benfield, Hastings, and others of that sort. The last of these has been treated by the company with an asperity of reprehension that has no parallel. They lament, "that the power of disposing of their property for perpetuity, should fall into such hands." Yet for fourteen years, with little interruption, he has governed all their affairs, of every description, with an absolute sway. He has had himself the means of heaping up immense wealth; and, during that whole period, the fortunes of hundreds have depended on his smiles and frowns. He himself tells you he is incumbered with two hundred and fifty young gentlemen, some of them of the best families in England, all of whom aim at returning with vast fortunes to Europe in the prime of life. He has then two hundred and fifty of your children as his hostages for your good behaviour; and loaded for years, as he has been, with the execrations of the natives, with the censures of the court of directors, and struck and blasted with the resolutions of this house, he still maintains the most despotic power ever known in India. He domineers with an overbearing sway in the assemblies of his pretended masters; and it is thought in a degree rash to venture to name his offences in this house, even as grounds of a legislative remedy.

On the other hand, consider the fate of those who have met with the applauses of the directors. Colonel Monson, one of the best of men, had his days shortened by the applauses, destitute of the support, of the company. General Clavering, whose panegyric was made in every dispatch from England, whose hearse was bedewed with the tears, and hung round with the eulogies of the court of directors, burst an honest and indignant heart at the treachery of those who ruined him by their praises. Uncommon patience and temper, supported Mr. Francis a while longer under the baneful influence of the commendation of the court of directors. His health however gave way at length; and, in utter despair, he returned to Europe. At his return the doors of the India House were shut to this man, who had been the object of their constant admiration. He has indeed escaped with life, but he has forfeited all expectation of credit, consequence, party, and following. He may well say, *Me nemo ministro fur erit, atque ides nulli comes exeo.* This man, whose deep reach of thought, whose large legislative conceptions, and whose grand plans of policy make the most shining part of our reports, from whence we have all learned our lessons, if we have learned any good ones; this man, from whose materials those gentlemen who have least acknowledged it have yet spoken as from a brief; this man, driven from his employment, discountenanced by the directors, has had no other reward, and no other distinction, but that inward "sunshine of the soul" which a good conscience can always bestow upon itself. He has not yet had so much as a good word, but from a person too insignificant to make any other return, for the means with which he has been furnished for performing his share of a duty which is equally urgent on us all.

Add to this, that from the highest in place to the lowest, every British subject, who, in obedience to the company's orders, has been active in the discovery of peculations, has been ruined. They have been driven from India. When they made their appeal at home they were not heard; when they attempted to return they were stopped. No artifice of fraud, no violence of power, has been omitted to destroy them in character as well as in fortune.

Worse, far worse, has been the fate of the poor creatures, the natives of India, whom the hypocrisy of the company has betrayed into complaint of oppression, and discovery of peculation. The first women in Bengal, the ranny of Rajeshahi, the ranny of Burdwan, the ranny of Amboa, by their weak and thoughtless trust in the company's honour and

protection, are utterly ruined: the first of these women, a person of princely rank, and once of correspondent fortune, who paid above two hundred thousand a year quit-rent to the state, is, according to very credible information, so completely beggared as to stand in need of the relief of alms. Mahomed Reza Khân, the second Mussulman in Bengal, for having been distinguished by the ill-omened honour of the countenance and protection of the court of directors, was, without the pretence of any inquiry whatsoever into his conduct, stripped of all his employments, and reduced to the lowest condition. His ancient rival for power, the rajah Nundcomar, was, by an insult on every thing which India holds respectable and sacred, hanged in the face of all his nation, by the judges you sent to protect that people; hanged for a pretended crime upon an *ex post facto* British act of parliament, in the midst of his evidence against Mr. Hastings. The accuser they saw hanged. The culprit, without acquittal or inquiry, triumphs on the ground of that murder: a murder not of Nundcomar only, but of all living testimony, and even of evidence yet unborn. From that time not a complaint has been heard from the natives against their governours. All the grievances of India have found a complete remedy.

Men will not look to acts of parliament, to regulations, to declarations, to votes, and resolutions. No, they are not such fools. They will ask, what is the road to power, credit, wealth, and honours? They will ask, what conduct ends in neglect, disgrace, poverty, exile, prison and gibbet? These will teach them the course which they are to follow. It is your distribution of these that will give the character and tone of your government. All the rest is miserable grimace.

When I accuse the court of directors of this habitual treachery, in the use of reward and punishment, I do not mean to include all the individuals in that court. There have been, Sir, very frequently, men of the greatest integrity and virtue among them; and the contrariety in the declarations and conduct of that court has arisen, I take it, from this:—That the honest directors have, by the force of matter of fact on the records, carried the reprobation of the evil measures of the servants in India. This could not be prevented, whilst these records stared them in the face; nor were the delinquents, either here or there, very solicitous about their reputation, as long as they were able to secure their power. The agreement of their partisans to censure them, blunted for a while the edge of a severe proceeding. It obtained for them a character of impartiality, which enabled them to recommend, with some sort of grace, what will always carry a plausible appearance, those treacherous expedients, called moderate measures. Whilst these were under discussion, new matter of complaint came over, which seemed to antiquate the first. The same circle was here trod round once more; and thus through years they proceeded in a compromise of censure for punishment; until, by shame and despair, one after another, almost every man, who preferred his duty to the company to the interest of their servants, has been driven from that court.

This, Sir, has been their conduct; and it has been the result of the alteration which was insensibly made in their constitution. The change was made insensibly; but it is now strong and adult, and as public and declared, as it is fixed beyond all power of reformation. So that there is none who hears me, that is not as certain as I am, that the company, in the sense in which it was formerly understood, has no existence. The question is not, what injury you may do to the proprietors of India stock; for there are no such men to be injured. If the active ruling part of the company who form the general court, who fill the offices, and direct the measures (the rest tell for nothing) were persons who held their stock as a means of their subsistence, who in the part they took were only concerned in the government of India, for the rise or fall of their dividend, it would be indeed a defective plan of policy. The interest of the people who are governed by them would not be their primary object; perhaps a very small part of their consideration at all. But then they might well be depended on, and perhaps more than persons in other respects preferable, for preventing the peculation of their servants to their own prejudice. Such a body would not easily have left their trade as a spoil to the avarice of those who received their wages. But now things are totally reversed. The stock is of no value, whether it be the qualification of a director or proprietor; and it is impossible that it should. A director's qualification may be worth about two thousand five hundred pounds—and the interest, at eight *per cent.* is about one hundred and sixty pounds a year. Of what value is that, whether it rise to ten, or fall to six, or to nothing, to him whose son, before he is in Bengal two months, and before he descends the steps of the council chamber, sells the grant of a single contract for forty thousand pounds? Accordingly the

stock is bought up in qualifications. The vote is not to protect the stock, but the stock is bought to acquire the vote; and the end of the vote is to cover and support, against justice, some man of power who has made an obnoxious fortune in India; or to maintain in power those who are actually employing it in the acquisition of such a fortune; and to avail themselves in return of his patronage, that he may shower the spoils of the east, "barbaric pearl and gold," on them, their families, and dependents. So that all the relations of the company are not only changed, but inverted. The servants in India are not appointed by the directors, but the directors are chosen by them. The trade is carried on with their capitals. To them the revenues of the country are mortgaged. The seat of the supreme power is in Calcutta. The house in Leadenhall Street is nothing more than a change for their agents, factors, and deputies to meet in, to take care of their affairs, and support their interests; and this so avowedly, that we see the known agents of the delinquent servants marshalling and disciplining their forces, and the prime spokesmen in all their assemblies.

Every thing has followed in this order, and according to the natural train of events. I will close what I have to say on the incorrigible condition of the company, by stating to you a few facts that will leave no doubt of the obstinacy of that corporation, and of their strength too, in resisting the reformation of their servants. By these facts you will be enabled to discover the sole grounds upon which they are tenacious of their charter. It is now more than two years that, upon account of the gross abuses and ruinous situation of the company's affairs, (which occasioned the cry of the whole world long before it was taken up here,) that we instituted two committees to enquire into the mismanagements by which the company's affairs had been brought to the brink of ruin. These inquiries had been pursued with unremitting diligence; and a great body of facts was collected and printed for general information. In the result of those inquiries, although the committees consisted of very different descriptions, they were unanimous. They joined in censuring the conduct of the Indian administration, and enforcing the responsibility upon two men, whom this house, in consequence of these reports, declared it to be the duty of the directors to remove from their stations, and recall to Great Britain, "*because they had acted in a manner repugnant to the honour and policy of this nation, and thereby brought great calamities on India, and enormous expenses on the East India company.*"

Here was no attempt on the charter Here was no question of their privileges. To vindicate their own honour, to support their own interests, to enforce obedience to their own orders; these were the sole object of the monitory resolution of this house. But as soon as the general court could assemble, they assembled to demonstrate who they really were. Regardless of the proceedings of this house, they ordered the directors not to carry into effect any resolution they might come to for the removal of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornby. The directors, still retaining some shadow of respect to this house, instituted an inquiry themselves, which continued from June to October; and after an attentive perusal and full consideration of papers, resolved to take steps for removing the persons who had been the objects of our resolution; but not without a violent struggle against evidence. Seven directors went so far as to enter a protest against the vote of their court. Upon this the general court takes the alarm; it re-assembles; it orders the directors to rescind their resolution, that is, not to recall Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornby, and to despise the resolution of the house of commons. Without so much as the pretence of looking into a single paper, without the formality of instituting any committee of inquiry, they superseded all the labours of their own directors, and of this house.

It will naturally occur to ask, how it was possible that they should not attempt some sort of examination into facts, as a colour for their resistance to a public authority, proceeding so very deliberately; and exerted, apparently at least, in favour of their own? The answer, and the only answer which can be given, is, that they were afraid that their true relation should be mistaken. They were afraid that their patrons and masters in India should attribute their support of them to an opinion of their cause, and not to an attachment to their power. They were afraid it should be suspected, that they did not mean blindly to support them in the use they made of that power. They determined to shew that they at least were set against reformation; that they were firmly resolved to bring the territories, the trade, and the stock of the company, to ruin, rather than be wanting in fidelity to their nominal servants and real masters, in the ways they took to their private fortunes.

Even since the beginning of this session, the same act of audacity was repeated, with the

same circumstances of contempt of all the decorum of inquiry on their part, and of all the proceedings of this house. They again made it a request to their favourite, and your culprit, to keep his post; and thanked and applauded him, without calling for a paper which could afford light into the merit or demerit of the transaction, and without giving themselves a moment's time to consider, or even to understand the articles of the Maratta peace. The fact is, that for a long time there was a struggle, a faint one indeed, between the company and their servants. But it is a struggle no longer. For some time the superiority has been decided. The interests abroad are become the settled preponderating weight both in the court of proprietors, and the court of directors. Even the attempt you have made to enquire into their practices and to reform abuses, has raised and piqued them to a far more regular and steady support. The company has made a common cause, and identified themselves, with the destroyers of India. They have taken on themselves all that mass of enormity; they are supporting what you have reprobated; those you condemn they applaud; those you order home to answer for their conduct, they request to stay, and thereby encourage to proceed in their practices. Thus the servants of the East India company triumph, and the representatives of the people of Great Britain are defeated.

I therefore conclude, what you all conclude, that this body, being totally perverted from the purposes of its institution, is utterly incorrigible; and because they are incorrigible, both in conduct and constitution, power ought to be taken out of their hands; just on the same principles on which have been made all the just changes and revolutions of government that have taken place since the beginning of the world.

I will now say a few words to the general principle of the plan which is set up against that of my right honourable friend. It is to re-commit the government of India to the court of directors. Those who would commit the reformation of India to the destroyers of it, are the enemies to that reformation. They would make a distinction between directors and proprietors, which, in the present state of things, does not, cannot exist. But a right honourable gentleman says, he would keep the present government of India in the court of directors; and would, to curb them, provide salutary regulations;—wonderful! That is, he would appoint the old offenders to correct the old offences; and he would render the vicious and the foolish wise and virtuous, by salutary regulations. He would appoint the wolf as guardian of the sheep; but he has invented a curious muzzle, by which this protecting wolf shall not be able to open his jaws above an inch or two at the utmost. Thus his work is finished. But I tell the right honourable gentleman, that controuled depravity is not innocence; and that it is not the labour of delinquency in chains, that will correct abuses. Will these gentlemen of the direction animadvert on the partners of their own guilt? Never did a serious plan of amending of any old tyrannical establishment propose the authors and abettors of the abuses as the reformers of them. If the undone people of India see their old oppressors in confirmed power, even by the reformation, they will expect nothing but what they will certainly feel, a continuance, or rather an aggravation, of all their former sufferings. They look to the seat of power, and to the persons who fill it; and they despise those gentlemen's regulations as much as the gentlemen do who talk of them.

But there is a cure for every thing. Take away, say they, the court of proprietors, and the court of directors will do their duty. Yes; as they have done it hitherto. That the evils in India have solely arisen from the court of proprietors, is grossly false. In many of them, the directors were heartily concurring; in most of them, they were encouraging, and sometimes commanding; in all, they were conniving.

But who are to choose this well-regulated and reforming court of directors?—Why, the very proprietors who are excluded from all management, for the abuse of their power. They will choose, undoubtedly, out of themselves, men like themselves; and those who are most forward in resisting your authority, those who are most engaged in faction or interest with the delinquents abroad, will be the objects of their selection. But gentlemen say, that when this choice is made, the proprietors are not to interfere in the measures of the directors, whilst those directors are busy in the controul of their common patrons and masters in India. No, indeed, I believe they will not desire to interfere. They will choose those whom they know may be trusted, safely trusted, to act in strict conformity to their common principles, manners, measures, interests, and connections. They will want neither monitor nor controul. It is not easy to choose men to act in conformity to a public interest against their private: but a sure dependance

may be had on those who are chosen to forward their private interest, at the expense of the public. But if the directors should slip, and deviate into rectitude, the punishment is in the hands of the general court, and it will surely be remembered to them at their next election.

If the government of India wants no reformation; but gentlemen are amusing themselves with a theory, conceiving a more democratic or aristocratic mode of government for these dependencies, or if they are in a dispute only about patronage; the dispute is with me of so little concern, that I should not take the pains to utter an affirmative or negative to any proposition in it. If it be only for a theoretical amusement that they are to propose a bill; the thing is at best frivolous and unnecessary. But if the company's government is not only full of abuse, but is one of the most corrupt and destructive tyrannies, that probably ever existed in the world, (as I am sure it is,) what a cruel mockery would it be in me, and in those who think like me, to propose this kind of remedy for this kind of evil!

I now come to the third objection, That this bill will increase the influence of the crown. An honourable gentleman has demanded of me, whether I was in earnest when I proposed to this house a plan for the reduction of that influence. Indeed, Sir, I was much, very much, in earnest. My heart was deeply concerned in it; and I hope the public has not lost the effect of it. How far my judgment was right, for what concerned personal favour and consequence to myself, I shall not presume to determine; nor is its effect upon *me* of any moment. But as to this bill, whether it increases the influence of the crown, or not, is a question I should be ashamed to ask. If I am not able to correct a system of oppression and tyranny, that goes to the utter ruin of thirty millions of my fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, but by some increase to the influence of the crown, I am ready here to declare, that I, who have been active to reduce it, shall be at least as active and strenuous to restore it again. I am no lover of names; I contend for the substance of good and protecting government, let it come from what quarter it will.

But I am not obliged to have recourse to this expedient. Much, very much the contrary. I am sure that the influence of the crown will by no means aid a reformation of this kind; which can neither be originated nor supported, but by the uncorrupt public virtue of the representatives of the people of England. Let it once get into the ordinary course of administration, and to me all hopes of reformation are gone. I am far from knowing or believing, that this bill will increase the influence of the crown. We all know, that the crown has ever had some influence in the court of directors; and that it has been extremely increased by the acts of 1773 and 1780. The gentlemen who, as a part of their reformation, propose "a more active controul on the part of the crown," which is to put the directors under a secretary of state, specially named for that purpose, must know, that their project will increase it further. But that old influence has had, and the new will have, incurable inconveniencies which cannot happen under the parliamentary establishment proposed in this bill. An honourable gentleman,* not now in his place, but who is well acquainted with the India company, and by no means a friend to this bill, has told you, that a ministerial influence has always been predominant in that body; and that to make the directors pliant to their purposes, ministers generally caused persons meanly qualified to be chosen directors. According to his idea, to secure subserviency, they submitted the company's affairs to the direction of incapacity. This was to ruin the company, in order to govern it. This was certainly influence in the very worst form in which it could appear. At best it was clandestine and irresponsible. Whether this was done so much upon system as that gentleman supposes, I greatly doubt. But such in effect the operation of government on that court unquestionably was; and such, under a similar constitution, it will be for ever. Ministers must be wholly removed from the management of the affairs of India, or they will have an influence in its patronage. The thing is inevitable. Their scheme of a new secretary of state, "with a more vigorous controul," is not much better than a repetition of the measure which we know by experience will not do. Since the year 1773 and the year 1780, the company has been under the controul of the secretary of state's office, and we had then three secretaries of state. If more than this is done, then they annihilate the direction which they pretend to support; and they augment the influence of the crown, of whose growth they affect so great an horrour. But in truth this scheme of reconciling a direction really and truly deliberative, with an office really and substantially controuling, is a sort of machinery that can be kept in

* Governour Johnstone.

order but a very short time. Either the directors will dwindle into clerks, or the secretary of state, as hitherto has been the course, will leave every thing to them, often through design, often through neglect. If both should affect activity, collision, procrastination, delay, and in the end, utter confusion must ensue.

But, Sir, there is one kind of influence far greater than that of the nomination to office. This, gentlemen in opposition have totally overlooked, although it now exists in its full vigour; and it will do so, upon their scheme, in at least as much force as it does now. That influence this bill cuts up by the roots: I mean the *influence of protection*. I shall explain myself:—The office given to a young man going to India is of trifling consequence. But he that goes out an insignificant boy, in a few years returns a great nabob. Mr. Hastings says he has two hundred and fifty of that kind of raw materials, who expect to be speedily manufactured into the merchantable quality I mention. One of these gentlemen, suppose, returns hither, loaded with odium and with riches. When he comes to England, he comes as to a prison, or as to a sanctuary; and either is ready for him, according to his demeanour. What is the influence in the grant of any place in India, to that which is acquired by the protection or compromise with such guilt, and with the command of such riches, under the dominion of the hopes and fears which power is able to hold out to every man in that condition? That man's whole fortune, half a million perhaps, becomes an instrument of influence, without a shilling of charge to the civil list; and the influx of fortunes which stand in need of this protection is continual. It works both ways; it influences the delinquent, and it may corrupt the minister. Compare the influence acquired by appointing for instance even a governour general, and that obtained by protecting him. I shall push this no further. But I wish gentlemen to roll it a little in their own minds.

The bill before you cuts off this source of influence. Its design and main scope is to regulate the administration of India upon the principles of a court of judicature; and to exclude, as far as human prudence can exclude, all possibility of a corrupt partiality, in appointing to office, or supporting in office, or covering from inquiry and punishment, any person who has abused or shall abuse his authority. At the board, as appointed and regulated by this bill, reward and punishment cannot be shifted and reversed by a whisper. That commission becomes fatal to cabal, to intrigue, and to secret representation, those instruments of the ruin of India. He that cuts off the means of premature fortune, and the power of protecting it when acquired, strikes a deadly blow at the great fund, the bank, the capital stock of Indian influence, which cannot be vested any where, or in any hands, without most dangerous consequences to the public.

The third and contradictory objection is, That this bill does not increase the influence of the crown. On the contrary, That the just power of the crown will be lessened, and transferred to the use of a party, by giving the patronage of India to a commission nominated by parliament, and independent of the crown. The contradiction is glaring, and it has been too well exposed to make it necessary for me to insist upon it. But passing the contradiction, and taking it without any relation, of all objections that is the most extraordinary. Do not gentlemen know, that the crown has not at present the grant of a single office under the company, civil or military, at home or abroad? So far as the crown is concerned, it is certainly rather a gainer; for the vacant offices in the new commission are to be filled up by the king.

It is argued as a part of the bill, derogatory to the prerogatives of the crown, that the commissioners named in the bill are to continue for a short term of years, too short in my opinion; and because, during that time, they are not at the mercy of every predominant faction of the court. Does not this objection lie against the present directors; none of whom are named by the crown, and a proportion of whom hold for this very term of four years? Did it not lie against the governour general and council named in the act of 1773—who were invested by name, as the present commissioners are to be appointed in the body of the act of parliament, who were to hold their places for a term of terms, and were not removeable at the discretion of the crown? Did it not lie against the re-appointment, in the year 1780, upon the very same terms? Yet at none of these times, whatever other objections the scheme might be liable to, was it supposed to be a derogation to the just prerogative of the crown, that a commission created by act of parliament should have its members named by the authority which called it into existence? This is not the disposal by parliament of any office derived from the authority of the crown, or now disposable by that authority. It is so far from being any thing new, violent, or alarming, that I do not recollect, in

any parliamentary commission, down to the commissioners of the land tax, that it has ever been otherwise.

The objection of the tenure for four years is an objection to all places that are not held during pleasure; but in that objection I pronounce the gentlemen, from my knowledge of their complexion and of their principles, to be perfectly in earnest. The party (say these gentlemen) of the minister who proposes this scheme will be rendered powerful by it; for he will name his party friends to the commission. This objection against party is a party objection; and in this too these gentlemen are perfectly serious. They see that if, by any intrigue, they should succeed to office, they will lose the *clandestine* patronage, the true instrument of clandestine influence, enjoyed in the name of subservient directors, and of wealthy trembling Indian delinquents. But as often as they are beaten off this ground, they return to it again. The minister will name his friends, and persons of his own party.—Whom should he name? Should he name his adversaries? Should he name those whom he cannot trust? Should he name those to execute his plans, who are the declared enemies to the principles of his reform? His character is here at stake. If he proposes for his own ends (but he never will propose) such names as, from their want of rank, fortune, character, ability, or knowledge, are likely to betray or to fall short of their trust, he is an independent house of commons; in a house of commons which has, by its own virtue, destroyed the instruments of parliamentary subservience. This house of commons would not endure the sound of such names. He would perish by the means which he is supposed to pursue for the security of his power. The first pledge he must give of his sincerity in this great reform, will be in the confidence which ought to be reposed in those names.

For my part, Sir, in this business I put all indirect considerations wholly out of my mind. My sole question, on each clause of the bill, amounts to this:—Is the measure proposed required by the necessities of India? I cannot consent totally to lose sight of the real wants of the people who are the objects of it, and to hunt after every matter of party squabble that may be started on the several provisions. On the question of the duration of the commission I am clear and decided. Can I, can any one who has taken the smallest trouble to be informed concerning the affairs of India, amuse himself with so strange an imagination, as that the habitual despotism and oppression, that the monopolies, the peculations, the universal destruction of all the legal authority of this kingdom, which have been for twenty years maturing to their present enormity, combined with the distance of the scene, the boldness and artifice of delinquents, their combination, their excessive wealth, and the faction they have made in England, can be fully corrected in a shorter term than four years? None has hazarded such an assertion —None, who has a regard for his reputation, will hazard it.

Sir, the gentlemen, whoever they are, who shall be appointed to this commission, have an undertaking of magnitude on their hands, and their stability must not only be, but it must be thought, real;—and who is it will believe, that any thing short of an establishment made, supported, and fixed in its duration, with all the authority of parliament, can be thought secure of a reasonable stability? The plan of my honourable friend is the reverse of that of reforming by the authors of the abuse. The best we could expect from them is, that they should not continue their ancient pernicious activity. To those we could think of nothing but applying *control*; as we are sure, that even a regard to their reputation (if any such thing exists in them) would oblige them to cover, to conceal, to suppress, and consequently to prevent, all cure of the grievances of India. For what can be discovered, which is not to their disgrace? Every attempt to correct an abuse would be a satire on their former administration. Every man they should pretend to call to an account, would be found their instrument or their accomplice. They can never see a beneficial regulation, but with a view to defeat it. The shorter the tenure of such persons, the better would be the chance of some amendment.

But the system of the bill is different. It calls in persons in no wise concerned with any act censured by parliament; persons generated with, and for, the reform, of which they are themselves the most essential part. To these the chief regulations in the bill are helps, not fetters; they are authorities to support, not regulations to restrain them. From these we look for much more than innocence. From these we expect zeal, firmness, and unremitted activity. Their duty, their character, binds them to proceedings of vigour; and they ought to have a tenure in their office which precludes all fear, whilst they are acting up to the purposes of their trust; a tenure without which, none will undertake plans that require

a series and system of acts. When they know that they cannot be whispered out of their duty, that their public conduct cannot be censured without a public discussion; that the schemes which they have begun will not be committed to those who will have an interest and credit in defeating and disgracing them; then we may entertain hopes. The tenure is for four years, or during their good behaviour. That good behaviour is as long as they are true to the principles of the bill; and the judgment is in either house of parliament. This is the tenure of your judges; and the valuable principle of the bill is to make a judicial administration for India. It is to give confidence in the execution of a duty, which requires as much perseverance and fortitude as can fall to the lot of any that is born of woman.

As to the gain by party, from the right honourable gentleman's bill, let it be shewn, that this supposed party advantage is pernicious to its object, and the objection is of weight; but until this is done, and this has not been attempted, I shall consider the sole objection, from its tendency to promote the interest of a party, as altogether contemptible. The kingdom is divided into parties, and it ever has been so divided, and it ever will be so divided; and if no system for relieving the subjects of this kingdom from oppression, and snatching its affairs from ruin, can be adopted until it is demonstrated that no party can derive an advantage from it, no good can ever be done in this country. If party is to derive an advantage from the reform of India, (which is more than I know, or believe,) it ought to be that party which alone, in this kingdom, has its reputation, nay its very being, pledged to the protection and preservation of that part of the empire. Great fear is expressed, that the commissioners named in this bill will shew some regard to a minister out of place. To men made like the objectors, this must appear criminal. Let it however be remembered by others, that if the commissioners should be his friends, they cannot be his slaves. But dependents are not in a condition to adhere to friends, nor to principles, nor to any uniform line of conduct. They may begin censors, and be obliged to end accomplices. They may be even put under the direction of those whom they were appointed to punish.

The fourth, and last objection is, That the bill will hurt public credit. I do not know whether this requires an answer. But if it does, look to your foundations. The sinking fund is the pillar of credit in this country; and let it not be forgot, that the distresses, owing to the mismanagement of the East India company, have already taken a million from that fund by the non-payment of duties. The bills drawn upon the company, which are about four millions, cannot be accepted without the consent of the treasury.

The treasury, acting under a parliamentary trust and authority, pledges the public for these millions. If they pledge the public, the public must have a security in its hands for the management of this interest, or the national credit is gone. For otherwise it is not only the East India company, which is a great interest, that is undone, but, clinging to the security of all your funds, it drags down the rest, and the whole fabric perishes in one ruin. If this bill does not provide a direction of integrity and of ability competent to that trust, the objection is fatal. If it does, public credit must depend on the support of the bill.

It has been said, if you violate this charter, what security has the charter of the bank, in which public credit is so deeply concerned, and even the charter of London, in which the rights of so many subjects are involved? I answer, In the like case they have no security at all—No—no security at all. If the bank should, by every species of mismanagement, fall into a state similar to that of the East India company; if it should be oppressed with demands it could not answer, engagements which it could not perform, and with bills for which it could not procure payment; no charter should protect the mismanagement from correction, and such public grievances from redress. If the city of London had the means and will of destroying an empire, and of cruelly oppressing and tyrannizing over millions of men as good as themselves, the charter of the city of London should prove no sanction to such tyranny and such oppression. Charters are kept, when their purposes are maintained: they are violated, when the privilege is supported against its end and its object.

Now, Sir, I have finished all I proposed to say, as my reasons for giving my vote to this bill. If I am wrong, it is not for want of pains to know what is right. This pledge, at least, of my rectitude I have given to my country.

And now, having done my duty to the bill, let me say a word to the author. I should leave him to his own noble sentiments, if the unworthy and illiberal language with which he has been treated, beyond all example of parliamentary liberty, did not make a few words necessary; not so much in justice to him, as to my own feelings. I must say then, that it

will be a distinction honourable to the age, that the rescue of the greatest number of the human race that ever were so grievously oppressed, from the greatest tyranny that was ever exercised, has fallen to the lot of abilities and dispositions equal to the task; that it has fallen to one who has the enlargement to comprehend, the spirit to undertake, and the eloquence to support, so great a measure of hazardous benevolence. His spirit is not owing to his ignorance of the state of men and things; he well knows what snares are spread about his path, from personal animosity, from court intrigues, and possibly from popular delusion. But he has put to hazard his ease, his security, his interest, his power, even his darling popularity, for the benefit of a people whom he has never seen. This is the road that all heroes have trod before him. He is traduced and abused for his supposed motives. He will remember, that obloquy is a necessary ingredient in the composition of all true glory: he will remember, that it was not only in the Roman customs, but it is in the nature and constitution of things, that calumny and abuse are essential parts of triumph. These thoughts will support a mind, which only exists for honour, under the burthen of temporary reproach. He is doing indeed a great good; such as rarely falls to the lot, and almost as rarely coincides with the desires of any man. Let him use his time. Let him give the whole length of the reins to his benevolence. He is now on a great eminence, where the eyes of mankind are turned to him. He may live long, he may do much. But here is the summit. He never can exceed what he does this day.

He has faults; but they are faults that, though they may in a small degree tarnish the lustre, and sometimes impede the march of his abilities, have nothing in them to extinguish the fire of great virtues. In those faults, there is no mixture of deceit, of hypocrisy, of pride, of ferocity, of complexional despotism, or want of feeling for the distresses of mankind. His are faults which might exist in a descendant of Henry the Fourth of France, as they did exist in that father of his country. Henry the Fourth wished that he might live to see a fowl in the pot of every peasant in his kingdom. That sentiment of homely benevolence was worth all the splendid sayings that are recorded of kings. But he wished perhaps for more than could be obtained, and the goodness of the man exceeded the power of the king. But this gentleman, a subject, may this day say this at least, with truth, that he secures the rice in his pot to every man in India. A poet of antiquity thought it one of the first distinctions to a prince whom he meant to celebrate, that through a long succession of generations, he had been the progenitor of an able and virtuous citizen, who, by force of the arts of peace, had corrected governments of oppression, and suppressed wars of rapine.

Indole proh quanta juvenis, quantumque daturus
Ausoniæ populis, ventura in sæcula civem.
Ille super Gangem, super exanditus et Indos,
Implebit terras voce; et furialia bella
Fulmine compescet linguæ.———

This was what was said of the predecessor of the only person to whose eloquence it does not wrong that of the mover of this bill to be compared. But the Ganges and the Indus are the patrimony of the fame of my honourable friend, and not of Cicero. I confess, I anticipate with joy the reward of those, whose whole consequence, power, and authority, exist only for the benefit of mankind; and I carry my mind to all the people, and all the names and descriptions, that, relieved by this bill, will bless the labours of this parliament, and the confidence which the best house of commons has given to him who the best deserves it. The little cavils of party will not be heard, where freedom and happiness will be felt. There is not a tongue, a nation, or religion in India, which will not bless the presiding care and manly beneficence of this house, and of him who proposes to you this great work. Your names will never be separated before the throne of the Divine Goodness, in whatever language, or with whatever rites, pardon is asked for sin, and reward for those who imitate the Godhead in his universal bounty to his creatures. These honours you deserve, and they will surely be paid, when all the jargon of influence, and party, and patronage, are swept into oblivion.

I have spoken what I think, and what I feel, of the mover of this bill. An honourable friend of mine, speaking of his merits, was charged with having made a studied panegyric. I don't know what his was. Mine, I am sure, is a studied panegyric; the fruit of much meditation; the result of the observation of near twenty years. For my own part, I am happy that I have lived to see this day; I feel myself overpaid for the labours of eighteen years, when, at this late period, I am able to take my share, by one humble vote, in destroying a tyranny that exists to the disgrace of this nation, and the destruction of so large a part of the human species.

A REPRESENTATION

TO HIS MAJESTY, MOVED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, BY THE RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE, AND SECONDED BY WILLIAM WINDHAM, ESQ. ON MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1784, AND NEGATIVED.—WITH A PREFACE AND NOTES.

PREFACE.

THE representation now given to the public relates to some of the most essential privileges of the house of commons. It would appear of little importance, if it were to be judged by its reception in the place where it was proposed. There it was rejected without debate. The subject matter may, perhaps, hereafter appear to merit a more serious consideration. Thinking men will scarcely regard the *penal* dissolution of a parliament as a very trifling concern. Such a dissolution must operate forcibly as an example; and it much imports the people of this kingdom to consider what lesson that example is to teach.

The late house of commons was not accused of an interested compliance to the will of a court. The charge against them was of a different nature. They were charged with being actuated by an extravagant spirit of independency. This species of offence is so closely connected with merit; this vice bears so near a resemblance to virtue; that the flight of a house of commons above the exact temperate medium of independence, ought to be correctly ascertained, lest we give encouragement to dispositions of a less generous nature, and less safe for the people; we ought to call for very solid and convincing proofs of the existence, and of the magnitude too of the evils, which are charged to an independent spirit, before we give sanction to any measure, that by checking a spirit so easily damped, and so hard to be excited, may affect the liberty of a part of our constitution, which, if not free, is worse than useless.

The Editor does not deny, that by possibility such an abuse may exist: but *primâ fronte*, there is no reason to presume it. The house of commons is not, by its complexion, peculiarly subject to the distempers of an independent habit. Very little compulsion is necessary, on the part of the people, to render it abundantly complaisant to ministers and favourites of all descriptions. It required a great length of time, very considerable industry and perseverance, no vulgar policy, the union of many men and many tempers, and the concurrence of events which do not happen every day, to build up an independent house of commons. Its demolition was accomplished in a moment; and it was the work of ordinary hands. But to construct is a matter of skill; to demolish, force and fury are sufficient.

The late house of commons has been punished for its independence. That example is made. Have we an example on record, of a house of commons punished for its servility? The rewards of a senate so disposed, are manifest to the world. Several gentlemen are very desirous of altering the constitution of the house of commons: but they must alter the frame and constitution of human nature itself, before they can so fashion it by any mode of election, that its conduct will not be influenced by reward and punishment; by fame, and by disgrace. if these examples take root in the minds of men, what members hereafter will be bold enough not to be corrupt? Especially as the king's high-way of obsequiousness is so very broad and easy. To make a passive member of parliament, no dignity of mind, no principles of honour, no resolution, no ability, no industry, no learning, no experience are in the least degree necessary. To defend a post of importance against a powerful enemy, requires an Elliot; a drunken invalid is qualified to hoist a white flag, or to deliver up the keys of the fortress on his knees.

The gentlemen chosen into this parliament, for the purpose of this surrender, were bred to better things; and are no doubt qualified for other service. But for this strenuous exertion of inactivity, for the vigorous task of submission and passive obedience, all their learning

and ability are rather a matter of personal ornament to themselves, than of the least use in the performance of their duty.

The present surrender, therefore, of rights and privileges, without examination, and the resolution to support any minister given by the secret advisers of the crown, determines not only on all the power and authority of the house, but it settles the character and description of the men who are to compose it; and perpetuates that character as long as it may be thought expedient to keep up a phantom of popular representation.

It is for the chance of some amendment before this new settlement takes a permanent form, and while the matter is yet soft and ductile, that the editor has republished this piece, and added some notes and explanations to it. His intentions, he hopes, will excuse him to the original mover, and to the world. He acts from a strong sense of the incurable ill effects of holding out the conduct of the late house of commons, as an example to be shunned by future representatives of the people.

MOTION RELATIVE TO THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE.

Lunæ, 14° *die Junij*, 1784.

A MOTION was made, That a representation be presented to his majesty, most humbly to offer to his royal consideration, that the address of this house, upon his majesty's speech from the throne, was dictated solely by our conviction of his majesty's own most gracious intentions towards his people, which, as we feel with gratitude, so we are ever ready to acknowledge with cheerfulness and satisfaction.

Impressed with these sentiments, we were willing to separate from our general expressions of duty, respect, and veneration to his majesty's royal person and his princely virtues, all discussion whatever, with relation to several of the matters suggested, and several of the expressions employed in that speech.

That it was not fit or becoming, that any decided opinion should be formed by his faithful commons, on that speech, without a degree of deliberation adequate to the importance of the object. Having afforded ourselves due time for that deliberation, we do now most humbly beg leave to represent to his majesty, that, in the speech from the throne, his ministers have thought proper to use a language of a very alarming import, unauthorized by the practice of good times, and irreconcilable to the principles of this government.

Humbly to express to his majesty, that it is the privilege and duty of this house to guard the constitution from all infringement on the part of ministers; and whenever the occasion requires it, to warn them against any abuse of the authorities committed to them: but it is very lately,* that in a manner not more unseemly than irregular and preposterous, ministers have thought proper, by admonition from the throne, implying distrust and reproach, to convey the expectations of the people to us, their sole representatives;† and have presumed to caution us, the natural guardians of the constitution, against any infringement of it on our parts.

This dangerous innovation we, his faithful commons, think it our duty to mark; and as these admonitions from the throne, by their frequent repetition, seem intended to lead gradually to the establishment of an usage, we hold ourselves bound thus solemnly to protest against them.

This house will be, as it ever ought to be, anxiously attentive to the inclinations and interests of its constituents: nor do we desire to straiten any of the avenues to the throne, or to either house of parliament. But the ancient order, in which the rights of the people have been exercised, is not a restriction of these rights. It is a method providently framed in favour of those privileges, which it preserves and enforces by keeping in that course which has been found the most effectual for answering their ends. His majesty may receive the opinions and wishes of individuals under their signatures, and of bodies corporate under their seals, as expressing their own particular sense: and he may grant such redress as the legal powers of the crown enable the crown to afford. This, and the other house of parliament, may also receive the wishes of such corporations and individuals by petition. The collective sense of his people his majesty is to receive from his commons in parliament assembled. It would destroy the whole spirit of the constitution, if his commons were to

* See King's Speech, Dec. 5, 1782, and May 19, 1784.

† "I will never submit to the doctrines I have heard this day from the woolsack, that the other house [house of commons] are the only representatives and guardians of the people's rights; I boldly maintain the contrary—I say this house [house of lords] *is equally the representatives of the people.*" *Lord Shelburne's Speech, April* 8, 1778. *Vide Parliamentary Register*, vol. 10, page 392.

receive that sense from the ministers of the crown, or to admit them to be a proper or a regular channel for conveying it.

That the ministers in the said speech declare, "His majesty has a just and confident reliance, that we (his faithful commons) are animated with the same sentiments of loyalty, and the same attachment to our excellent constitution, which he had the happiness to see so fully manifested in every part of the kingdom."

To represent, that his faithful commons have never failed in loyalty to his majesty. It is new to them to be reminded of it. It is unnecessary and invidious to press it upon them by any example. This recommendation of loyalty, after his majesty has sat for so many years, with the full support of all descriptions of his subjects, on the throne of this kingdom, at a time of profound peace, and without any pretence of the existence or apprehension of war or conspiracy, becomes in itself a source of no small jealousy to his faithful commons; as many circumstances lead us to apprehend that therein the ministers have reference to some other measures and principles of loyalty, and to some other ideas of the constitution, than the laws require, or the practice of parliament will admit.

No regular communication of the proofs of loyalty and attachment to the constitution, alluded to in the speech from the throne, have been laid before this house, in order to enable us to judge of the nature, tendency, or occasion of them; or in what particular acts they were displayed; but if we are to suppose the manifestations of loyalty (which are held out to us as an example for imitation) consist in certain addresses delivered to his majesty, promising support to his majesty in the exercise of his prerogative, and thanking his majesty for removing certain of his ministers, on account of the votes they have given upon bills depending in parliament,—if this be the example of loyalty alluded to in the speech from the throne, then we must beg leave to express our serious concern for the impression which has been made on any of our fellow-subjects by misrepresentations, which have seduced them into a seeming approbation of proceedings subversive of their own freedom. We conceive, that the opinions delivered in these papers were not well considered; nor were the parties duly informed of the nature of the matters on which they were called to determine, nor of those proceedings of parliament which they were led to censure.

We shall act more advisedly.—The loyalty we shall manifest will not be the same with theirs; but, we trust, it will be equally sincere, and more enlightened. It is no slight authority which shall persuade us (by receiving as proofs of loyalty the mistaken principles lightly taken up in these addresses) obliquely to criminate, with the heavy and ungrounded charge of disloyalty and disaffection, an uncorrupt, independent, and reforming parliament.* Above all, we shall take care that none of the rights and privileges, always claimed, and since the accession of his majesty's illustrious family constantly exercised by this house (and

* In that parliament the house of commons by two several resolutions put an end to the American war. Immediately on the change of ministry, which ensued, in order to secure their own independence, and to prevent the accumulation of new burthens on the people by the growth of a civil list debt, they passed the establishment bill. By that bill thirty-six offices tenable by members of parliament were suppressed; and an order of payment was framed, by which the growth of any fresh debt was rendered impracticable. The debt on the civil list from the beginning of the present reign had amounted to one million three hundred thousand pounds and upwards. Another act was passed for regulating the office of the paymaster general, and the offices subordinate to it. A million of public money had sometimes been in the hands of the paymasters: this act prevented the possibility of any money whatsoever being accumulated in that office in future. The offices of the exchequer, whose emoluments in time of war were excessive, and grew in exact proportion to the public burthens, were regulated; some of them suppressed, and the rest reduced to fixed salaries. To secure the freedom of election against the crown, a bill was passed to disqualify all officers concerned in the collection of the revenue in any of its branches from voting in elections; a most important act, not only with regard to its primary object, the freedom of election, but as materially forwarding the due collection of revenue. For the same end, (the preserving the freedom of election,) the house rescinded the famous judgment relative to the Middlesex election, and expunged it from the journals. On the principle of reformation of their own house, connected with a principle of public œconomy, an act passed for rendering contractors with government incapable of a seat in parliament. The India Bill, (unfortunately lost in the house of lords,) pursued the same idea to its completion; and disabled all servants of the East India company from a seat in that house for a certain time, and until their conduct was examined into and cleared. The remedy of infinite corruptions and of infinite disorders and oppressions, as well as the security of the most important objects of public œconomy, perished with that bill and that parliament. That parliament also instituted a committee to inquire into the collection of the revenue in all its branches, which prosecuted its duty with great vigour; and suggested several material improvements.

which we hold and exercise in trust for the commons of Great Britain, and for their benefit) shall be constructively surrendered, or even weakened and impaired under ambiguous phrases, and implications of censure on the late parliamentary proceedings. If these claims are not well founded, they ought to be honestly abandoned; if they are just, they ought to be steadily and resolutely maintained.

Of his majesty's own gracious disposition towards the true principles of our free constitution, his faithful commons never did, or could entertain a doubt: but we humbly beg leave to express to his majesty our uneasiness concerning other new and unusual expressions of his ministers, declaratory of a resolution "to support in their *just balance*, the rights and privileges of every branch of the legislature."

It were desirable that all hazardous theories concerning a balance of rights and privileges (a mode of expression wholly foreign to parliamentary usage) might have been forborne. His majesty's faithful commons are well instructed in their own rights and privileges, which they are determined to maintain on the footing upon which they were handed down from their ancestors: they are not unacquainted with the rights and privileges of the house of peers; and they know and respect the lawful prerogatives of the crown: but they do not think it safe to admit any thing concerning the existence of a balance of those rights, privileges, and prerogatives; nor are they able to discern to what objects ministers would apply their fiction of balance; nor what they would consider as a just one. These unauthorized doctrines have a tendency to stir improper discussions; and to lead to mischievous innovations in the constitution.*

That his faithful commons most humbly recommend, instead of the inconsiderate speculations of unexperienced men, that on all occasions, resort should be had to the happy practice of parliament, and to those solid maxims of government which have prevailed since the accession of his majesty's illustrious family, as furnishing the only safe principles on which the crown and parliament can proceed.

We think it the more necessary to be cautious on this head, as, in the last parliament, the present ministers had thought proper to countenance, if not to suggest, an attack upon the most clear and undoubted rights and privileges of this house.*

* If these speculations are let loose, the house of lords may quarrel with their share of the legislature, as being limited with regard to the origination of grants to the crown and the origination of money bills. The advisers of the crown may think proper to bring its negative into ordinary use; and even to dispute, whether a mere negative, compared with the deliberative power, exercised in the other houses, be such a share in the legislature, as to produce a due balance in favour of that branch; and thus justify the previous interference of the crown, in the manner lately used. The following will serve to shew how much foundation there is for great caution, concerning these novel speculations. Lord Shelburne, in his celebrated speech, April 8th, 1778, expresses himself as follows: Vide *Parliamentary Register*, vol. x.

"The noble and learned lord on the woolsack, in the debate which opened the business of this day, asserted that your lordships were incompetent to make any alteration in a money bill, or a bill of supply. I should be glad to see the matter fully and fairly discussed, and the subject brought forward and argued upon precedent, as well as all its collateral relations. I should be pleased to see the question fairly committed, were it for no other reason, but to hear the sleek smooth contractors from the other house, come to this bar and declare, that they, and they only, *could frame a money bill;* and they, and they *only*, could dispose of the *property of the peers of Great Britain*. Perhaps some arguments more plausible than those I heard this day from the woolsack, to shew that the commons have an uncontroulable, unqualified right, to bind your lordships' property, may be urged by them. At present, I beg leave to differ from the noble and learned lord; for until the claim, after a solemn discussion of the house, is openly and directly relinquished, I shall continue to be of opinion, that your lordships have a right to *alter*, *amend*, or reject a money bill."

The Duke of Richmond also, in his letter to the volunteers of Ireland, speaks of several of the powers exercised by the house of commons, in the light of usurpations; and his grace is of opinion, that when the people are restored to what he conceives to be their rights, in electing the house of commons, the other branches of the legislature ought to be restored to theirs. Vide *Remembrancer*, vol. xvi.

* By an act of parliament, the directors of the East India company are restrained from acceptance of bills drawn from India, beyond a certain amount, without the consent of the commissioners of the treasury. The late house of commons finding bills to an immense amount, drawn upon that body by their servants abroad, and knowing their circumstances to be exceedingly doubtful, came to a resolution providently cautioning the lords of the treasury against the acceptance of these bills, until the house should otherwise direct. The court lords then took occasion to declare against the resolution as illegal, by the commons undertaking to direct in the execution of a trust created by act of parliament. The house justly alarmed at this resolution, which went to the destruction of the whole of its superintending capacity, and particularly in matters relative to its own province of money, directed a committee to search the journals, and they found a regular series of precedents, commencing from the remotest of those records, and carried on to that day, by

Fearing, from these extraordinary admonitions, and from the new doctrines, which seem to have dictated several unusual expressions, that his majesty has been abused by false representations of the late proceedings in parliament, we think it our duty respectfully to inform his majesty, that no attempt whatever has been made against his lawful prerogatives, or against the rights and privileges of the peers, by the late house of commons, in any of their addresses, votes, or resolutions: neither do we know of any proceeding by bill, in which it was proposed to abridge the extent of his royal prerogative: but, if such provision had existed in any bill, we protest, and we declare, against all speeches, acts or addresses, from any persons whatsoever, which have a tendency to consider such bills, or the persons concerned in them, as just objects of any kind of censure and punishment from the throne. Necessary reformations may hereafter require, as they have frequently done in former times, limitations and abridgements, and in some cases an entire extinction of some branch of prerogative. If bills should be improper in the form in which they appear in the house where they originate, they are liable, by the wisdom of this constitution, to be corrected, and even to be totally set aside, elsewhere. This is the known, the legal, and the safe remedy: but whatever, by the manifestation of the royal displeasure, tends to intimidate individual members from proposing, or this house from receiving, debating, and passing bills, tends to prevent even the beginning of every reformation in the state; and utterly destroys the deliberative capacity of parliament.—We therefore claim, demand, and insist upon it, as our undoubted right, that no persons shall be deemed proper objects of animadversion by the crown, in any mode whatever, for the votes which they give, or the propositions which they make, in parliament.

We humbly conceive, that besides its share of the legislative power, and its right of impeachment, that by the law and usage of parliament, this house has other powers and capacities, which it is bound to maintain. This house is assured, that our humble advice on the exercise of prerogative will be heard with the same attention with which it has ever been regarded; and that it will be followed by the same effects which it has ever produced, during the happy and glorious reigns of his majesty's royal progenitors; not doubting but that, in all those points, we shall be considered as a counsel of wisdom and weight to advise, and not merely as an accuser of competence to criminate.* This house claims both capacities; and we trust we shall be left to our free discretion which of them we shall employ as best calculated for his majesty's, and the national service.—Whenever we shall see it expedient to offer our advice concerning his majesty's servants, who are those of the public, we confidently hope, that the personal favour of any minister, or any set of ministers, will not be more dear to his majesty, than the credit and character of a house of commons. It is an experiment full of peril to put the representative wisdom and justice of his majesty's people in the wrong; it is a crooked and desperate design, leading to mischief, the extent of which no human wisdom can foresee, to attempt to form a prerogative party in the nation, to be resorted to as occasion shall require, in derogation from the authority of the commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled: it is a contrivance full of danger, for ministers to set up the representative and constituent bodies of the commons of this kingdom as two separate and distinct powers, formed to counterpoise each other, leaving the preference in the hands of secret advisers of the crown. In such a situation of things, these advisers, taking advantage of the differences which may accidentally arise, or may purposely be fomented between them, will have it in their choice to resort to the one or the other, as may best suit the purposes of their sinister ambition. By exciting an emulation and contest between the representative and the constituent bodies, as parties contending for credit and influence at the throne, sacrifices will be made by both; and the whole can end in nothing else than the destruction of the dearest rights and liberties of the nation. If there must be another mode of conveying the collective sense of the people to the throne than that by the house of commons, it ought to be fixed and defined, and its authority ought to be settled: it ought not to exist in so precarious and dependent a state as that ministers should have it in their power, at their own mere pleasure, to

which it appeared, that the house interfered by an authoritative advice and admonition, upon every act of executive government without exception; and in many much stronger cases than that which the lords thought proper to quarrel with.

* "I observe at the same time, that there is *no charge or complaint* suggested against my present ministers."—*The king's answer, 25th February* 1784, *to the address of the house of commons.* Vide *Resolutions of the House of Commons, printed for Debrett*, p. 31.

acknowledge it with respect, or to reject it with scorn.

It is the undoubted prerogative of the crown to dissolve parliament; but we beg leave to lay before his majesty, that it is, of all the trusts vested in his majesty, the most critical and delicate, and that in which this house has the most reason to require, not only the good faith, but the favour of the crown. His commons are not always upon a par with his ministers in an application to popular judgment: it is not in the power of the members of this house to go to their election at the moment the most favourable for them. It is in the power of the crown to choose a time for their dissolution whilst great and arduous matters of state and legislation are depending, which may be easily misunderstood, and which cannot be fully explained before that misunderstanding may prove fatal to the honour that belongs, and to the consideration that is due, to members of parliament.

With his majesty is the gift of all the rewards, the honours, distinctions, favour, and graces of the state; with his majesty is the mitigation of all the rigours of the law; and we rejoice to see the crown possessed of trusts calculated to obtain good-will, and charged with duties which are popular and pleasing. Our trusts are of a different kind. Our duties are harsh and invidious in their nature; and justice and safety is all we can expect in the exercise of them. We are to offer salutary, which is not always pleasing, counsel: we are to inquire and to accuse: and the objects of our inquiry and charge will be for the most part persons of wealth, power, and extensive connections: we are to make rigid laws for the preservation of revenue, which of necessity more or less confine some action, or restrain some function, which before was free: what is the most critical and invidious of all, the whole body of the public impositions originate from us, and the hand of the house of commons is seen and felt in every burthen that presses on the people. Whilst, ultimately, we are serving them, and in the first instance whilst we are serving his majesty, it will be hard, indeed, if we should see a house of commons the victim of its zeal and fidelity, sacrificed by his ministers to those very popular discontents which shall be excited by our dutiful endeavours for the security and greatness of his throne. No other consequence can result from such an example, but that, in future, the house of commons, consulting its safety at the expense of its duties, and suffering the whole energy of the state to be relaxed, will shrink from every service, which, however necessary, is of a great and arduous nature; or that, willing to provide for the public necessities, and, at the same time, to secure the means of performing that task, they will exchange independence for protection, and will court a subservient existence through the favour of those ministers of state, or those secret advisers, who ought themselves to stand in awe of the commons of this realm.

A house of commons, respected by his ministers, is essential to his majesty's service: it is fit that they should yield to parliament, and not that parliament should be new modelled until it is fitted to their purposes. If our authority is only to be held up when we coincide in opinion with his majesty's advisers, but is to be set at nought the moment it differs from them, the house of commons will sink into a mere appendage of administration; and will lose that independent character which, inseparably connecting the honour and reputation with the acts of this house, enables us to afford a real, effective, and substantial support to his government. It is the deference shewn to our opinion, when we dissent from the servants of the crown, which alone can give authority to the proceedings of this house, when it concurs with their measures.

That authority once lost, the credit of his majesty's crown will be impaired in the eyes of all nations. Foreign powers, who may yet wish to revive a friendly intercourse with this nation, will look in vain for that hold which gave a connection with Great Britain the preference to an alliance with any other state. A house of commons, of which ministers were known to stand in awe, where every thing was necessarily discussed, on principles fit to be openly and publicly avowed, and which could not be retracted or varied without danger, furnished a ground of confidence in the public faith, which the engagement of no state dependent on the fluctuation of personal favour, and private advice, can ever pretend to. If faith with the house of commons, the grand security for the national faith itself, can be broken with impunity, a wound is given to the political importance of Great Britain, which will not easily be healed.

That there was a great variance between the late house of commons and certain persons, whom his majesty has been advised to make and continue as ministers, in defiance of the advice of that house, is notorious to the world. That house did not confide in these ministers; and they withheld their confidence from them for reasons for which posterity will

honour and respect the names of those who composed that house of commons, distinguished for its independence. They could not confide in persons who have shewn a disposition to dark and dangerous intrigues. By these intrigues they have weakened, if not destroyed, the clear assurance which his majesty's people, and which all nations ought to have, of what are, and what are not, the real acts of his government.

If it should be seen that his ministers may continue in their offices, without any signification to them of his majesty's displeasure at any of their measures, whilst persons considerable for their rank, and known to have had access to his majesty's sacred person, can with impunity abuse that advantage, and employ his majesty's name to disavow and counteract the proceedings of his official servants, nothing but distrust, discord, debility, contempt of all authority, and general confusion, can prevail in his government.

This we lay before his majesty, with humility and concern, as the inevitable effect of a spirit of intrigue in his executive government; an evil which we have but too much reason to be persuaded exists and increases. During the course of the last session it broke out in a manner the most alarming. This evil was infinitely aggravated by the unauthorized, but not disavowed use which has been made of his majesty's name, for the purpose of the most unconstitutional, corrupt, and dishonourable influence on the minds of the members of parliament, that ever was practised in this kingdom. No attention, even to the exteriour decorum, in the practice of corruption, and intimidation employed on peers, was observed: several peers were obliged under menaces to retract their declarations, and to recall their proxies.

The commons have the deepest interest in the purity and integrity of the peerage. The peers dispose of all the property in the kingdom, in the last resort; and they dispose of it on their honour and not on their oaths, as all the members of every other tribunal in the kingdom must do; though in them the proceeding is not conclusive. We have, therefore, a right to demand that no application shall be made to peers of such a nature as may give room to call in question, much less to attaint, our sole security for all that we possess. This corrupt proceeding appeared to the house of commons, who are the natural guardians of the purity of parliament, and of the purity of every branch of judicature, a most reprehensible and dangerous practice, tending to shake the very foundation of the authority of the house of peers; and they branded it as such by their resolution.

The house had not sufficient evidence to enable them legally to punish this practice, but they had enough to caution them against all confidence in the authors and abettors of it. They performed their duty in humbly advising his majesty against the employment of such ministers; but his majesty was advised to keep those ministers, and to dissolve that parliament. The house, aware of the importance and urgency of its duty with regard to the British interests in India, which were and are in the utmost disorder, and in the utmost peril, most humbly requested his majesty not to dissolve the parliament during the course of their very critical proceedings on that subject. His majesty's gracious condescension to that request was conveyed in the royal faith, pledged to a house of parliament, and solemnly delivered from the throne. It was but a very few days after a committee had been, with the consent and concurrence of the chancellor of exchequer, appointed for an inquiry into certain accounts delivered to the house by the court of directors, and then actually engaged in that inquiry, that the ministers, regardless of the assurance given from the crown to a house of commons, did dissolve that parliament. We most humbly submit to his majesty's consideration the consequences of this their breach of public faith.

Whilst the members of the house of commons, under that security, were engaged in his majesty's and the national business, endeavours were industriously used to calumniate those whom it was found impracticable to corrupt. The reputation of the members, and the reputation of the house itself, was undermined in every part of the kingdom.

In the speech from the throne relative to India, we are cautioned by the ministers, "not to lose sight of the effect any measure may have on the constitution of our country." We are apprehensive that a calumnious report spread abroad of an attack upon his majesty's prerogative by the late house of commons, may have made an impression on his royal mind, and have given occasion to this unusual admonition to the present. This attack is charged to have been made in the late parliament, by a bill which passed the house of commons in the late session of that parliament, for the regulation of the affairs, for the preservation of the commerce, and for the amendment of the government of this nation, in the East Indies.

That his majesty and his people may have

an opportunity of entering into the ground of this injurious charge, we beg leave humbly to acquaint his majesty, that, far from having made any infringement whatsoever on any part of his royal prerogative, that bill did, for a limited time, give to his majesty certain powers never before possessed by the crown; and for this his present ministers (who, rather than fall short in the number of their calumnies, employ some that are contradictory) have slandered this house, as aiming at the extension of an unconstitutional influence in his majesty's crown. This pretended attempt to increase the influence of the crown, they were weak enough to endeavour to persuade his majesty's people was among the causes which excited his majesty's resentment against his late ministers.

Further, to remove the impressions of this calumny concerning an attempt in the house of commons against his prerogative, it is proper to inform his majesty, that the territorial possessions in the East Indies never have been declared, by any public judgment, act, or instrument, or any resolution of parliament whatsoever, to be the subject matter of his majesty's prerogative; nor have they ever been understood as belonging to his ordinary administration, or to be annexed or united to his crown; but that they are acquisitions of a new and peculiar description,* unknown to the ancient executive constitution of this country.

From time to time, therefore, parliament provided for their government according to its discretion, and to its opinion of what was required by the public necessities. We do not know that his majesty was entitled, by prerogative, to exercise any act of authority whatsoever in the company's affairs, or that in effect, such authority has ever been exercised. His majesty's patronage was not taken away by that bill; because it is notorious that his majesty never originally had the appointment of a single officer, civil or military, in the company's establishment in India; nor has the least degree of patronage ever been acquired to the crown in any other manner or measure, than as the power was thought expedient to be granted by act of parliament; that is, by the very same authority by which the offices were disposed of and regulated in the bill, which his majesty's servants have falsely and injuriously represented as infringing upon the prerogative of the crown.

Before the year 1773 the whole administration of India, and the whole patronage to office there, was in the hands of the East India company. The East India company is not a branch of his majesty's prerogative administration, nor does that body exercise any species of authority under it, nor indeed from any British title, that does not derive all its legal validity from acts of parliament.

When a claim was asserted to the India territorial possessions in the occupation of the company, these possessions were not claimed as parcel of his majesty's patrimonial estate, or as a fruit of the ancient inheritance of his crown. They were claimed for the public. And when agreements were made with the East India company concerning any composition for the holding, or any participation of the profits of those territories, the agreement was made with the public, and the preambles of the several acts have uniformly so stated it. These agreements were not made (even nominally) with his majesty, but with parliament; and the bills making and establishing such agreements always originated in this house, which appropriated the money to await the disposition of parliament, without the ceremony of previous consent from the crown even so much as suggested by any of his ministers; which previous consent is an observance of decorum, not indeed of strict right, but generally paid when a new appropriation takes place in any part of his majesty's prerogative revenues.

* The territorial possessions in the East Indies were acquired to the company, in virtue of grants from the Great Mogul, in the nature of offices and jurisdictions, to be held under *him*, and dependent upon *his* crown; with the express condition of being obedient to orders from *his* court, and of paying an annual tribute to *his* treasury. It is true, that no obedience is yielded to these orders; and for some time past there has been no payment made of this tribute. But it is under a grant, so conditioned, that they still hold. To subject the king of Great Britain as tributary to a foreign power, by the acts of his subjects—to suppose the grant valid, and yet the condition void—to suppose it good for the king, and insufficient for the company—to suppose it an interest divisible between the parties;—these are some few of the many legal difficulties to be surmounted, before the common law of England can acknowledge the East India company's Asiatic affairs to be a subject matter of *prerogative*, so as to bring it within the verge of English jurisprudence. It is a very anomalous species of power and property which is held by the East India company. Our English prerogative law does not furnish principles, much less precedents, by which it can be defined or adjusted. Nothing but the eminent dominion of parliament ever every British subject in every concern, and in every circumstance in which he is placed, can adjust this new intricate matter. Parliament may act wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly; but parliament alone is competent to it.

In pursuance of a right thus uniformly recognised, and uniformly acted on, when parliament undertook the reformation of the East India company in 1773, a commission was appointed as the commission in the late bill was appointed; and it was made to continue for a term of years, as the commission in the late bill was to continue; all the commissioners were named in parliament, as in the late bill they were named. As they received, so they held their offices, wholly independent of the crown; they held them for a fixed term; they were not removable by an address of either house, or even of both houses of parliament, a precaution observed in the late bill, relative to the commissioners proposed therein; nor were they bound by the strict rules of proceeding which regulated and restrained the late commissioners against all possible abuse of a power which could not fail of being diligently and zealously watched by the ministers of the crown, and the proprietors of the stock, as well as by parliament. Their proceedings were, in that bill, directed to be of such a nature as easily to subject them to the strictest revision of both, in case of any malversation.

In the year 1780, an act of parliament again made provision for the government of those territories for another four years, without any sort of reference to prerogative; nor was the least objection taken at the second, more than at the first of those periods, as if an infringement had been made upon the rights of the crown; yet his majesty's ministers have thought fit to represent the late commission as an entire innovation on the constitution, and the setting up a new order and estate in the nation, tending to the subversion of the monarchy itself.

If the government of the East Indies, other than by his majesty's prerogative, be, in effect, a fourth order in the commonwealth, this order has long existed; because the East India company has for many years enjoyed it in the fullest extent, and does at this day enjoy the whole administration of those provinces, and the patronage to offices throughout that great empire, except as it is controuled by act of parliament.

It was the ill-condition, and ill-administration of the company's affairs, which induced this house (merely as a temporary establishment) to vest the same powers which the company did before possess, (and no other,) for a limited time, and under very strict directions, in proper hands, until they could be restored, or further provision made concerning them. It was therefore no creation whatever of a new power, but the removal of an old power, long since created, and then existing, from the management of those persons who had manifestly and dangerously abused their trust. This house, which well knows the parliamentary origin of all the company's powers and privileges, and is not ignorant or negligent of the authority which may vest those powers and privileges in others, if justice and the public safety so require, is conscious to itself, that it no more creates a new order in the state, by making occasional trustees for the direction of the company, than it originally did in giving a much more permanent trust to the directors, or to the general court of that body. The monopoly of the East India company was a derogation from the general freedom of trade belonging to his majesty's people. The powers of government, and of peace and war, are parts of prerogative of the highest order. Of our competence to restrain the rights of all his subjects by act of parliament, and to vest those high and eminent prerogatives even in a particular company of merchants, there has been no question. We beg leave most humbly to claim as our right, and as a right which this house has always used, to frame such bills, for the regulation of that commerce, and of the territories held by the East India company, and every thing relating to them, as to our discretion shall seem fit: and we assert and maintain, that therein we follow, and do not innovate on the constitution.

That his majesty's ministers, misled by their ambition, have endeavoured, if possible, to form a faction in the country against the popular part of the constitution; and have therefore thought proper to add to their slanderous accusation against a house of parliament, relative to his majesty's prerogative, another of a different nature, calculated for the purpose of raising fears and jealousies among the corporate bodies of the kingdom, and of persuading uninformed persons belonging to those corporations to look to, and to make addresses to them as protectors of their rights, under their several charters, from the designs which they, without any ground, charged the then house of commons to have formed against *charters in general*. For this purpose they have not scrupled to assert, that the exertion of his majesty's prerogative in the late precipitate change in his administration, and the dissolution of the late parliament, were measures adopted in order to rescue the people and their rights out of the hands of the house of commons, their representatives.

We trust that his majesty's subjects are not

yet so far deluded as to believe that the charters, or that any other of their local or general privileges can have a solid security in any place but where that security has always been looked for, and always found, in the house of commons. Miserable and precarious indeed would be the state of their franchises, if they were to find no defence but from that quarter from whence they have always been attacked.*

But the late house of commons in passing that bill, made no attack upon any powers or privileges, except such as a house of commons has frequently attacked, and will attack, (and they trust, in the end, with their wonted success,) that is, upon those which are corruptly and oppressively administered; and this house do faithfully assure his majesty, that we will correct, and, if necessary for the purpose, as far

* The attempt upon charters and the privileges of the corporate bodies of the kingdom in the reigns of Charles the Second, and James the Second, was made by the *crown*. It was carried on by the ordinary course of law, in courts instituted for the security of the property and franchises of the people. This attempt made by the *crown*, was attended with complete success. The corporate rights of the city of London, and of all the companies it contains, were by solemn judgment of law declared forfeited, and all their franchises, privileges, properties and estates, were of course seized into the hands of the *crown*. The injury was from the crown; the redress was by parliament. A bill was brought into the *house of commons*, by which the judgment against the city of London, and against the companies, was reversed; and this bill passed the house of lords without any complaint of trespass on their jurisdiction, although the bill was for a reversal of a judgment in law. By this act, which is in the second of William and Mary, chap. 8, the question of forfeiture of that charter is for ever taken out of the power of any court of law. No cognizance can be taken of it except in parliament.

Although the act above-mentioned has declared the judgment against the corporation of London to be *illegal*; yet Blackstone makes no scruple of asserting, that "perhaps in strictness of law, the proceedings in most of them [the Quo Warranto causes] were sufficiently regular," leaving it in doubt, whether this regularity did not apply to the corporation of London, as well as to any of the rest; and he seems to blame the proceeding (as most blameable it was) not so much on account of illegality, as for the crown's having employed a legal proceeding for political purposes. He calls it "an exertion of *an act of law* for the purposes of the state."

The same security which was given to the city of London, would have been extended to all the corporations, if the house of commons could have prevailed. But the bill for that purpose passed but by a majority of one in the lords; and it was entirely lost by a prorogation, which is the act of the crown. Small, indeed, was the security which the corporation of London enjoyed, before the act of William and Mary, and which all the other corporations secured by no statute, enjoy at this hour, if strict law was employed against them. The use of strict law has always been rendered very delicate by the same means, by which the almost unmeasured legal powers residing (and in many instances dangerously residing) in the crown, are kept within due bounds; I mean, that strong superintending power in the house of commons, which inconsiderate people have been prevailed on to condemn as trenching on prerogative. Strict law is by no means such a friend to the rights of the subject, as they have been taught to believe. They who have been most conversant in this kind of learning, will be most sensible of the danger of submitting corporate rights of high political importance to these subordinate tribunals. The general heads of law on that subject are vulgar and trivial. On them there is not much question. But it is far from easy to determine what special acts, or what special neglect of action, shall subject corporations to a forfeiture. There is so much laxity in this doctrine, that great room is left for favour or prejudice, which might give to the crown an entire dominion over those corporations. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly true, that every subordinate corporate right ought to be subject to controul; to superiour direction; and even to forfeiture upon just cause. In this reason and law agree. In every judgment given on a corporate right of great political importance, the policy and prudence make no small part of the question. To these considerations a court of law is not competent; and indeed an attempt at the least intermixture of such ideas with the matter of law, could have no other effect, than wholly to corrupt the judicial character of the court, in which such a cause should come to be tried. It is besides to be remarked, that, if in virtue of a legal process, a forfeiture should be adjudged, the court of law has no power to modify or mitigate. The whole franchise is annihilated, and the corporate property goes into the hands of the crown. They who hold the new doctrines concerning the power of the house of commons, ought well to consider in such a case by what means the corporate rights could be revived, or the property could be recovered out of the hands of the crown. But parliament can do, what the courts neither can do nor ought to attempt. Parliament is competent to give due weight to all political considerations. It may modify; it may mitigate; and it may render perfectly secure, all that it does not think fit to take away. It is not likely that parliament will ever draw to itself the cognizance of questions concerning ordinary corporations, farther than to protect them in case attempts are made to induce a forfeiture of their franchises.

The case of the East India company is different even from that of the greatest of these corporations. No monopoly of trade, beyond their own limits, is vested in the corporate body of any town or city in the kingdom. Even within these limits the monopoly is not general. The company has the monopoly of the trade of half the world. The first corporation of the kingdom, has for the object of its jurisdiction only a few matters of subordinate police. The East India company governs an empire through

as in us lies, will wholly destroy every species of power and authority exercised by British subjects to the oppression, wrong, and detriment of the people, and to the impoverishment and desolation of the countries subject to it.

The propagators of the calumnies against that house of parliament have been indefatigable in exaggerating the supposed injury done to the East India company by the suspension of the authorities which they have, in every instance, abused; as if power had been wrested, by wrong and violence, from just and prudent hands; but they have, with equal care, concealed the weighty grounds and reasons on which that house had adopted the most moderate of all possible expedients for rescuing the natives of India from oppression, and for saving the interest of the real and honest proprietors of their stock, as well as that great national, commercial concern, from imminent ruin.

The ministers aforesaid have also caused it to be reported, that the house of commons have confiscated the property of the East India company. It is the reverse of truth. The whole management was a trust for the proprietors, under their own inspection (and it was so provided for in the bill) and under the inspection of parliament. That bill, so far from confiscating the company's property, was the only one which, for several years past, did not, in some shape or other, affect their property, or restrain them in the disposition of it.

It is proper that his majesty and all his people should be informed, that the house of commons have proceeded, with regard to the East India company, with a degree of care, circumspection, and deliberation, which has not been equalled in the history of parliamentary proceedings. For sixteen years the state and condition of that body has never been wholly out of their view: in the year 1767, the house took those objects into consideration, in a committee of the whole house: the business was pursued in the following year: in the year 1772, two committees were appointed for the same purpose, which examined into their affairs with much diligence, and made very ample reports: in the year 1773, the proceedings were carried to an act of parliament, which proved ineffectual to its purpose; the oppressions and abuses in India have since rather increased than diminished, on account of the greatness of the temptations and convenience of the opportunites, which got the better of the legislative provisions calculated against ill practices, then in their beginnings: insomuch that, in 1781, two committees were again instituted, who have made seventeen reports. It was upon the most minute, exact, and laborious collection and discussion of facts, that the late house of commons proceeded in the reform which they attempted in the administration of India, but which has been frustrated by ways and means the most dishonourable to his majesty's government, and the most pernicious to the constitution of this kingdom. His majesty was so sensible of the disorders in the company's administration, that the consideration of that subject was no less than six times recommended to this house in speeches from the throne.

The result of the parliamentary inquiries has been, that the East India company was found totally corrupted, and totally perverted from the purposes of its institution, whether political or commercial; that the powers of war and peace given by the charter had been abused, by kindling hostilities in every quarter for the purposes of rapine; that almost all the treaties of peace they have made, have only given cause to so many breaches of public faith; that countries once the most flourishing are reduced to a state of indigence, decay, and depopulation, to the diminution of our strength, and to the infinite dishonour of our national

all its concerns, and all its departments, from the lowest office of œconomy to the highest councils of state,—an empire to which Great Britain is in comparison but a respectable province. To leave these concerns without superiour cognizance would be madness; to leave them to be judged in the courts below on the principles of confined jurisprudence, would be folly. It is well if the whole legislative power is competent to the correction of abuses, which are commensurate to the immensity of the object they affect.

The idea of an absolute power has indeed its terrours; but that objection lies to every parliamentary proceeding; and as no other can regulate the abuses of such a charter, it is fittest that sovereign authority should be exercised, where it is most likely to be attended with the most effectual correctives. These correctives are furnished by the nature and course of parliamentary proceedings, and by the infinitely diversified characters who compose the two houses. In effect and virtually they form a vast number, variety, and succession of judges and jurors. The fulness, the freedom, and publicity of discussion, leaves it easy to distinguish what are acts of power, and what the determinations of equity and reason. There prejudice corrects prejudice, and the different asperities of party zeal mitigate and neutralize each other. So far from violence being the general characteristic of the proceedings of parliament, whatever the beginnings of any parliamentary process may be, its general fault in the end is, that it is found incomplete and ineffectual.

character; that the laws of this kingdom are notoriously, and almost in every instance, despised; that the servants of the company, by the purchase of qualifications to vote in the general court, and, at length, by getting the company itself deeply in their debt, have obtained the entire and absolute mastery in the body, by which they ought to have been ruled and coerced. Thus their malversations in office are supported instead of being checked by the company. The whole of the affairs of that body are reduced to a most perilous situation; and many millions of innocent and deserving men, who are under the protection of this nation, and who ought to be protected by it, are oppressed by a most despotic and rapacious tyranny. The company and their servants have strengthened themselves by this confederacy, have set at defiance the authority and admonitions of this house employed to reform them; and when this house had selected certain principal delinquents, whom they declared it the duty of the company to recall, the company held out its legal privileges against all reformation; positively refused to recall them; and supported those who had fallen under the just censure of this house, with new and stronger marks of countenance and approbation.

The late house discovering the reversed situation of the company, by which the nominal servants are really the masters, and the offenders are become their own judges, thought fit to examine into the state of their commerce; and they have also discovered that their commercial affairs are in the greatest disorder, that their debts have accumulated beyond any present or obvious future means of payment, at least under the actual administration of their affairs; that this condition of the East India company has begun to affect the sinking fund itself, on which the public credit of the kingdom rests, a million and upwards being due to the customs, which that house of commons, whose intentions towards the company have been so grossly misrepresented, were indulgent enough to respite. And thus, instead of confiscating their property, the company received without interest (which in such a case had been before charged) the use of a very large sum of the public money. The revenues are under the peculiar care of this house, not only as the revenues originate from us, but as, on every failure of the funds set apart for support of the national credit, or to provide for the national strength and safety, the task of supplying every deficiency falls upon his majesty's faithful commons, this house must, in effect, tax the people. This house therefore, at every moment, incurs the hazard of becoming obnoxious to its constituents.

The enemies of the late house of commons resolved, if possible, to bring on that event. They therefore endeavoured to misrepresent the provident means adopted by the house of commons for keeping off this invidious necessity, as an attack on the rights of the East India company; for they well knew that on the one hand if, for want of proper regulation and relief, the company should become insolvent, or even stop payment, the national credit and commerce would sustain an heavy blow; and that calamity would be justly imputed to parliament, which after such long inquiries, and such frequent admonitions from his majesty, had neglected so essential and so urgent an article of their duty: on the other hand they knew, that, wholly corrupted as the company is, nothing effectual could be done to preserve that interest from ruin, without taking for a time the national objects of their trusts out of their hands; and then a cry would be industriously raised against the house of commons, as depriving British subjects of their legal privileges. The restraint, being plain and simple, must be easily understood by those who would be brought with great difficulty, to comprehend the intricate detail of matters of fact, which render this suspension of the administration of India absolutely necessary on motives of justice, of policy, of public honour, and public safety.

The house of commons had not been able to devise a method, by which the redress of grievances could be effected through the authors of those grievances; nor could they imagine how corruptions could be purified by the corrupters and the corrupted; nor do we conceive, how any reformation can proceed from the known abettors and supporters of the persons who have been guilty of the misdemeanors which parliament has reprobated, and who for their own ill purposes have given countenance to a false and delusive state of the company's affairs, fabricated to mislead parliament, and to impose upon the nation.*

* The purpose of the misrepresentation being now completely answered, there is no doubt but the committee in this parliament, appointed by the ministers themselves, will justify the grounds upon which the last parliament proceeded; and will lay open to the world, the dreadful state of the company's affairs, and the grossness of their own calumnies upon this head. By delay, the new assembly is come to this disgraceful situation, of allowing a dividend of eight per cent. by act of parliament, without the least matter before them to justify the granting of any dividend at all.

Your commons feel, with a just resentment, the inadequate estimate which your ministers have formed of the importance of this great concern. They call on us to act upon the principles of those who have not inquired into the subject; and to condemn those who, with the most laudable diligence, have examined and scrutinized every part of it. The deliberations of parliament have been broken; the season of the year is unfavourable; many of us are new members, who must be wholly unacquainted with the subject, which lies remote from the ordinary course of general information.

We are cautioned against an infringement of the constitution; and it is impossible to know, what the secret advisers of the crown, who have driven out the late ministers for their conduct in parliament, and have dissolved the late parliament for a pretended attack upon prerogative, will consider as such an infringement. We are not furnished with a rule, the observance of which can make us safe from the resentment of the crown, even by an implicit obedience to the dictates of the ministers who have advised that speech: we know not how soon those ministers may be disavowed; and how soon the members of this house, for our very agreement with them, may be considered as objects of his majesty's displeasure. Until by his majesty's goodness and wisdom the late example is completely done away, we are not free.

We are well aware, in providing for the affairs of the east, with what an adult strength of abuse, and of wealth and influence growing out of that abuse, his majesty's commons had, in the last parliament, and we still have, to struggle. We are sensible that the influenc of that wealth, in a much larger degree and measure than at any former period, may have penetrated into the very quarter from whence alone any real reformation can be expected.*

If, therefore, in the arduous affairs recommended to us, our proceedings should be ill adapted, feeble and ineffectual; if no delinquency should be prevented, and no delinquent should be called to account; if every person should be caressed, promoted, and raised in power, in proportion to the enormity of his offences; if no relief should be given to any of the natives unjustly dispossessed of their rights, jurisdictions, and properties; if no cruel and unjust exactions shall be forborne; if the source of no peculation, or oppressive gain should be cut off; if, by the omission of the opportunities that were in our hands, our Indian empire should fall into ruin irretrievable, and in its fall crush the credit, and overwhelm the revenues of this country, we stand acquitted to our honour, and to our conscience, who have reluctantly seen the weightiest interests of our country, at times the most critical to its dignity and safety, rendered the sport of the inconsiderate and unmeasured ambition of individuals, and by that means the wisdom of his majesty's government degraded in the public estimation, and the policy and character of this renowned nation rendered contemptible in the eyes of all Europe.

It passed in the negative.

* This will be evident to those who consider the number and description of directors and servants of the East India company, chosen into the present parliament. The light in which the present ministers hold the labours of the house of commons, in searching into the disorders in the Indian administration, and all its endeavours for the reformation of the government there, without any distinction of times, or of the persons concerned, will appear from the following extract from a speech of the present lord chancellor. After making a high-flown panegyric on those whom the house of commons had condemned by their resolutions, he said—"Let us not be misled by reports from committees of *another* house, to which, I again repeat *I pay as much attention, as I would do to the history of Robinson Crusoe.* Let the conduct of the East India company be fairly and fully inquired into; let it be acquitted or condemned by evidence brought to the bar of the house. Without entering very deep into the subject, let me reply in a few words to an observation which fell from a noble and learned lord, that the company's finances are distressed, and that they owe at this moment, a million sterling, to the nation. When such a charge is brought, will parliament in its justice forget, that the company is restricted from employing *that credit, which its great and flourishing situation* gives to it?"

MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

ON THE

MOTION MADE FOR PAPERS

RELATIVE TO THE

DIRECTIONS FOR CHARGING

THE NABOB OF ARCOT'S PRIVATE DEBTS TO EUROPEANS, ON THE REVENUES OF THE CARNATIC.

February 28th, 1785.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING SEVERAL DOCUMENTS.

Ενταυθα τι πραττειν εχρην ανδρα των Πλατωνος και Αριστοτελους ζηλωτην δογματων; αρα πειοραν ανθρωπους αθλιους τοις κλεπταις εκδιδομενους, η κατα δυναμιν αυτοις αμυνειν οιμαι, ως μη το κυκνειον εξαδουσι δια το θεμισες εργαστηριον των τοιουτων; Εμοι μεν ουν αισχρον ειναι δοκει τους μεν χιλιαρχους, οταν λειπωσι την ταξιν, καταδικαζειν την δε υπερ αθλιων ανθρωπων υπολειπειν ταξιν, οταν δεη προς κλεπτας αγωνιζεσθαι τοιουτους· και ταυτα του Θεου συμμαχουντος ημιν, ωσπερ ουν ἐταξεν.

JULIANI Epist. 17.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THAT the least informed reader of this speech may be enabled to enter fully into the spirit of the transaction on occasion of which it was delivered, it may be proper to acquaint him, that among the princes dependent on this nation in the southern part of India, the most considerable at present is commonly known by the title of the Nabob of Arcot.

This prince owed the establishment of his government, against the claims of his elder brother, as well as those of other competitors, to the arms and influence of the British East India company. Being thus established in a considerable part of the dominions he now possesses, he began, about the year 1765, to form, at the instigation (as he asserts) of the servants of the East India company, a variety of designs for the further extension of his territories. Some years after, he carried his views to certain objects of interiour arrangement, of a very pernicious nature. None of these designs could be compassed without the aid of the company's arms; nor could those arms be employed consistently with an obedience to the company's orders. He was therefore advised to form a more secret, but an equally powerful interest among the servants of that company, and among others both at home and abroad. By engaging them in his interests, the use of the company's power might be obtained without their ostensible authority; the power might even be employed in defiance of the authority; if the case should require, as in truth it often did require, a proceeding of that degree of boldness.

The company had put him into possession of several great cities and magnificent castles. The good order of his affairs, his sense of personal dignity, his ideas of oriental splendour, and the habits of an Asiatic life (to which, being a native of India, and a Mahometan, he had from his infancy been inured) would naturally have led him to fix the seat of his government within his own dominions. Instead of this, he totally sequestered himself from his country; and, abandoning all appearance of state, he took up his residence in an ordinary house, which he purchased in the suburbs of the company's factory at Madras. In that place he has lived, without removing one day from thence, for several years past. He has there continued a constant cabal with the company's servants, from the highest to the lowest; creating, out of the ruins of the country, brilliant fortunes for those who will, and entirely destroying those who will not, be subservient to his purposes.

An opinion prevailed, strongly confirmed by several passages in his own letters, as well as by a combination of circumstances forming a body of evidence which cannot be resisted, that very great sums have been by him distributed, through a long course of years, to some of the company's servants. Besides these presumed payments in ready money (of which, from the nature of the thing, the direct proof is very difficult) debts have at several periods been acknowledged to those gentlemen, to an immense amount; that is, to some millions of sterling money. There is strong reason to suspect, that the body of these debts is wholly fictitious, and was never created by money *bona fide* lent. But even on a supposition that this vast sum was really advanced, it was impossible that the very reality of such an astonishing transaction should not cause some degree of alarm, and incite to some sort of inquiry.

It was not at all seemly, at the moment when the company itself was so distressed, as to require a suspension, by act of parliament, of the payment of bills drawn on them from India —and also a direct tax upon every house in England, in order to facilitate the vent of their goods, and to avoid instant insolvency—at that very moment that their servants should appear in so flourishing a condition, as, besides ten millions of other demands on their masters, to be entitled to claim a debt of three or four millions more from the territorial revenue of one of their dependent princes.

The ostensible pecuniary transactions of the nabob of Arcot, with very private persons, are so enormous, that they evidently set aside every pretence of policy, which might induce a prudent government in some instances to wink at ordinary loose practice in ill-managed departments. No caution could be too great in handling this matter; no scrutiny too exact. It was evidently the interest, and as evidently at least in the power, of the creditors, by admitting secret participation in this dark and

undefined concern, to spread corruption to the greatest and the most alarming extent.

These facts relative to the debts were so notorious, the opinion of their being a principal source of the disorders of the British government in India was so undisputed and universal, that there was no party, no description of men in parliament, who did not think themselves bound, if not in honour and conscience, at least in common decency, to institute a vigorous inquiry into the very bottom of the business, before they admitted any part of that vast and suspicious charge to be laid upon an exhausted country. Every plan concurred in directing such an inquiry; in order that whatever was discovered to be corrupt, fraudulent, or oppressive, should lead to a due animadversion on the offenders; and if any thing fair and equitable in its origin should be found (nobody suspected that much, comparatively speaking, would be so found) it might be provided for; in due subordination, however, to the ease of the subject, and the service of the state.

These were the alleged grounds for an inquiry, settled in all the bills brought into parliament relative to India, and there were I think no less than four of them. By the bill, commonly called Mr. Pitt's bill, the inquiry was specially, and by express words, committed to the court of directors, without any reserve for the interference of any other person or persons whatsoever. It was ordered that *they* should make the inquiry into the origin and justice of these debts, as far as the materials in *their* possession enabled them to proceed; and where *they* found those materials deficient, *they* should order the presidency of Fort St. George [Madras] to complete the inquiry.

The court of directors applied themselves to the execution of the trust reposed in them. They first examined into the amount of the debt, which they computed, at compound interest, to be £2,945,600 sterling. Whether their mode of computation, either of the original sums, or the amount on compound interest, was exact; that is, whether they took the interest too high, or the several capitals too low, is not material. On whatever principle any of the calculations were made up, none of them found the debt to differ from the recital of the act, which asserted, that the sums claimed were "*very* large." The last head of these debts the directors compute at £2,465,680 sterling. Of the existence of this debt the directors heard nothing until 1776, and they say, that, "although they had *repeatedly* written to the nabob of Arcot, and to their servants, respecting the debt, yet they *had never been able to trace the origin thereof, or to obtain any satisfactory information on the subject.*"

The court of directors, after stating the circumstances under which the debts appeared to them to have been contracted, add as follows: "For these reasons we should have thought it our duty to enquire *very minutely* into those debts, even if the act of parliament had been silent on the subject, before we concurred in any measure for their payment. But with the positive injunctions of the act before us, to examine into their nature and origin, we are indispensably bound to direct such an inquiry to be instituted." They then order the president and council of Madras to enter into a full examination, &c. &c.

The directors having drawn up their order to the presidency on these principles, communicated the draught of the general letter in which those orders were contained, to the board of his majesty's ministers, and other servants lately constituted by Mr. Pitt's East India act. These ministers, who had just carried through parliament the bill ordering a specific inquiry, immediately drew up another letter, on a principle directly opposite to that, which was prescribed by the act of parliament, and followed by the directors. In these second orders, all idea of an inquiry into the justice and origin of the pretended debts, particularly of the last, the greatest, and the most obnoxious to suspicion, is abandoned. They are all admitted and established without any investigation whatsoever; except some private conference with the agents of the claimants is to pass for an investigation; and a fund for their discharge is assigned and set apart out of the revenues of the Carnatic.—To this arrangement in favour of their servants, servants suspected of corruption, and convicted of disobedience, the directors of the East India company were ordered to set their hands, asserting it to arise from their own conviction and opinion, in flat contradiction to their recorded sentiments, their strong remonstrance, and their declared sense of their duty, as well under their general trust and their oath as directors, as under the express injunctions of an act of parliament.

The principles upon which this summary proceeding was adopted by the ministerial board, are stated by themselves in a number in the appendix to this speech.

By another section of the same act, the same court of directors were ordered to take

into consideration and to decide on the indeterminate rights of the rajah of Tanjore and the nabob of Arcot; and in this, as in the former case, no power of appeal, revision, or alteration was reserved to any other. It was a jurisdiction, in a cause between party and party, given to the court of directors specifically. It was known that the territories of the former of these princes had been twice invaded and pillaged, and the prince deposed and imprisoned, by the company's servants, influenced by the intrigues of the latter, and for the purpose of paying his pretended debts. The company had, in the year 1775, ordered a restoration of the rajah to his government, under certain conditions. The rajah complained that his territories had not been completely restored to him; and that no part of his goods, money, revenues, or records, unjustly taken and withheld from him, were ever returned. The nabob, on the other hand, never ceased to claim the country itself, and carried on a continued train of negotiation, that it should again be given up to him, in violation of the company's public faith.

The directors, in obedience to this part of the act, ordered an inquiry, and came to a determination to restore certain of his territories to the rajah. The ministers proceeding as in the former case, without hearing any party, rescinded the decision of the directors, refused the restitution of the territory, and without regard to the condition of the country of Tanjore, which had been within a few years four times plundered, (twice by the nabob of Arcot, and twice by enemies brought upon it solely by the politics of the same nabob, the declared enemy of that people,) and without discounting a shilling for their sufferings, they accumulate an arrear of about £400,000 of pretended tribute to this enemy; and then they order the directors to put their hands to a new adjudication, directly contrary to a judgment in a judicial character and trust, solemnly given by them, and entered on their records.

These proceedings naturally called for some inquiry. On the 28th of February, 1785, Mr. Fox made the following motion in the house of commons, after moving that the clauses of the act should be read—"That the proper officer do lay before this house copies and extracts of all letters and orders of the court of directors of the united East India company, in pursuance of the injunctions contained in the 37th and 38th clauses of the said act;" and the question being put, it passed in the negative by a very great majority.

The last speech in the debate was the following; which is given to the public, not as being more worthy of its attention than others (some of which were of consummate ability) but as entering more into the detail of the subject.

SPEECH, &c.

The times we live in, Mr. Speaker, have been distinguished by extraordinary events. Habituated, however, as we are, to uncommon combinations of men and of affairs, I believe nobody recollects any thing more surprising than the spectacle of this day. The right honourable gentleman,* whose conduct is now in question, formerly stood forth in this house, the prosecutor of the worthy baronet† who spoke after him. He charged him with several grievous acts of malversation in office; with abuses of a public trust of a great and heinous nature. In less than two years we see the situation of the parties reversed; and a singular revolution puts the worthy baronet in a fair way of returning the prosecution in a recriminatory bill of pains and penalties, grounded on a breach of public trust, relative to the government of the very same part of India. If he should undertake a bill of that kind, he will find no difficulty in conducting it with a degree of skill and vigour fully equal to all that have been exerted against him.

But the change of relation between these two gentlemen is not so striking as the total difference of their deportment under the same unhappy circumstances. Whatever the merits of the worthy baronet's defence might have been, he did not shrink from the charge. He met it with manliness of spirit, and decency of behaviour. What would have been thought of him, if he had held the present language of his old accuser? When articles were exhibited against him by that right honourable gentleman he did not think proper to tell the house that we ought to institute no inquiry, to inspect no-

* Right honourable Henry Dundas.

† Sir Thomas Rumbold, late governour of Madras.

paper, to examine no witness. He did not tell us (what at that time he might have told us with some shew of reason) that our concerns in India were matters of delicacy; that to divulge any thing relative to them would be mischievous to the state. He did not tell us, that those who would enquire into his proceedings were disposed to dismember the empire. He had not the presumption to say, that for his part, having obtained in his Indian presidency, the ultimate object of his ambition, his honour was concerned in executing with integrity the trust which had been legally committed to his charge: That others, not having been so fortunate, could not be so disinterested; and therefore their accusations could spring from no other source than faction, and envy to his fortune.

Had he been frontless enough to hold such vain, vapouring language in the face of a grave, a detailed, a specified matter of accusation, whilst he violently resisted every thing which could bring the merits of his cause to the test; had he been wild enough to anticipate the absurdities of this day; that is, had he inferred, as his late accuser had thought proper to do, that he could not have been guilty of malversation in office, for this sole and curious reason, that he had been in office; had he argued the impossibility of his abusing his power on this sole principle, that he had power to abuse, he would have left but one impression on the mind of every man who heard him, and who believed him in his senses—that in the utmost extent he was guilty of the charge.

But, Sir, leaving these two gentlemen to alternate, as criminal and accuser, upon what principles they think expedient; it is for us to consider, whether the chancellor of the exchequer, and the treasurer of the navy, acting as a board of controul, are justified by law or policy, in suspending the legal arrangements made by the court of directors, in order to transfer the public revenues to the private emolument of certain servants of the East India company, without the inquiry into the origin and justice of their claims, prescribed by an act of parliament?

It is not contended, that the act of parliament did not expressly ordain an inquiry. It is not asserted that this inquiry was not, with equal precision of terms, specially committed under particular regulations to the court of directors. I conceive, therefore, the board of controul had no right whatsoever to intermeddle in that business. There is nothing certain in the principles of jurisprudence, if this be not undeniably true, that when a special authority is given to any persons by name to do some particular act, that no others, by virtue of general powers, can obtain a legal title to intrude themselves into that trust, and to exercise those special functions in their place. I therefore consider the intermeddling of ministers in this affair as a downright usurpation. But if the strained construction, by which they have forced themselves into a suspicious office (which every man, delicate with regard to character, would rather have sought constructions to avoid) were perfectly sound and perfectly legal, of this I am certain, that they cannot be justified in declining the inquiry which had been prescribed to the court of directors. If the board of controul did lawfully possess the right of executing the special trust given to that court, they must take it as they found it, subject to the very same regulations which bound the court of directors. It will be allowed that the court of directors had no authority to dispense with either the substance or the mode of inquiry prescribed by the act of parliament. If they had not, where, in the act, did the board of controul acquire that capacity? Indeed, it was impossible they should acquire it.—What must we think of the fabric and texture of an act of parliament which should find it necessary to prescribe a strict inquisition; that should descend into minute regulations for the conduct of that inquisition; that should commit this trust to a particular description of men, and in the very same breath should enable another body, at their own pleasure, to supersede all the provisions the legislature had made, and to defeat the whole purpose, end, and object of the law? This cannot be supposed even of an act of parliament conceived by the ministers themselves, and brought forth during the delirium of the last session.

My honourable friend has told you in the speech which introduced his motion, that fortunately this question is not a great deal involved in the labyrinths of Indian detail. Certainly not. But if it were, I beg leave to assure you, that there is nothing in the Indian detail which is more difficult than in the detail of any other business. I admit, because I have some experience of the fact, that for the interiour regulation of India, a minute knowledge of India is requisite. But on any specific matter of delinquency in its government, you are as capable of judging, as if the same thing were done at your door. Fraud, injustice, oppression, peculation, engendered in India, are crimes of the same blood, family, and cast, with those that are born and bred in England. To go no farther than the case before us: you are just as competent to judge whether the sum of

four millions sterling ought, or ought not, to be passed from the public treasury into a private pocket, without any title except the claim of the parties, when the issue of fact is laid in Madras, as when it is laid in Westminster. Terms of art, indeed, are different in different places; but they are generally understood in none. The technical style of an Indian treasury is not one jot more remote than the jargon of our own exchequer, from the train of our ordinary ideas, or the idiom of our common language. The difference therefore in the two cases is not in the comparative difficulty or facility of the two subjects, but in our attention to the one, and our total neglect of the other. Had this attention and neglect been regulated by the value of the several objects, there would be nothing to complain of. But the reverse of that supposition is true. The scene of the Indian abuse is distant indeed; but we must not infer, that the value of our interest in it is decreased in proportion as it recedes from our view. In our politics, as in our common conduct, we shall be worse than infants, if we do not put our senses under the tuition of our judgment, and effectually cure ourselves of that optical illusion which makes a briar at our nose of greater magnitude, than an oak at five hundred yards distance.

I think I can trace all the calamities of this country to the single source of our not having had steadily before our eyes a general, comprehensive, well-connected, and well-proportioned view of the whole of our dominions, and a just sense of their true bearings and relations. After all its reductions, the British empire is still vast and various. After all the reductions of the house of commons, (stripped as we are of our brightest ornaments, and of our most important privileges,) enough are yet left to furnish us, if we please, with means of shewing to the world, that we deserve the superintendance of as large an empire as this kingdom ever held, and the continuance of as ample privileges as the house of commons, in the plenitude of its power, had been habituated to assert. But if we make ourselves too little for the sphere of our duty; if, on the contrary, we do not stretch and expand our minds to the compass of their object, be well assured, that every thing about us will dwindle by degrees, until at length our concerns are shrunk to the dimensions of our minds. It is not a predilection to mean, sordid, home-bred cares, that will avert the consequences of a false estimation of our interest, or prevent the shameful dilapidation into which a great empire must fall, by mean reparations upon mighty ruins.

I confess I feel a degree of disgust, almost leading to despair, at the manner in which we are acting in the great exigences of our country. There is now a bill in this house, appointing a rigid inquisition into the minutest detail of our offices at home. The collection of sixteen millions annually; a collection on which the public greatness, safety, and credit have their reliance; the whole order of criminal jurisprudence, which holds together society itself, have at no time obliged us to call forth such power; no, nor any thing like them. There is not a principle of the law and constitution of this country that is not subverted to favour the execution of that project.* And for what is all this apparatus of bustle and terrour? Is it because any thing substantial is expected from it? No. The stir and bustle itself is the end proposed. The eye-servants of a short-sighted master will employ themselves, not on what is most essential to his affairs, but on what is nearest to his ken. Great difficulties have given a just value to œconomy; and our minister of the day must be an œconomist, whatever it may cost us. But where is he to exert his talents? At home to be sure; for where else can he obtain a profitable credit for their exertion? It is nothing to him, whether the object on which he works under our eye be promising or not. If he does not obtain any public benefit, he may make regulations without end. Those are sure to pay in present expectation, whilst the effect is at a distance, and may be the concern of other times, and other men. On these principles he chooses to suppose (for he does not pretend more than to suppose) a naked possibility, that he shall draw some resource out of crumbs dropped from the trenchers of penury; that something shall be laid in store from the short allowance of revenue officers, overloaded with duty, and famished for want of bread; by a reduction from officers who are at this very hour ready to batter the treasury with what breaks through stone walls, for an *increase* of their appointments. From the marrowless bones of these skeleton establishments, by the use of every sort of cutting, and of every sort of fretting tool, he flatters himself that he may chip and rasp an empirical alimentary powder, to diet into some similitude of health and substance the languishing chimeras of fraudulent reformation.

Whilst he is thus employed according to his policy and to his taste, he has not leisure to enquire into those abuses in India that are drawing off money by millions from the trea-

* Appendix, No. 1

sures of this country, which are exhausting the vital juices from members of the state, where the public inanition is far more sorely felt than in the local exchequer of England. Not content with winking at these abuses, whilst he attempts to squeeze the laborious ill-paid drudges of English revenue, he lavishes in one act of corrupt prodigality, upon those who never served the public in any honest occupation at all, an annual income equal to two-thirds of the whole collection of the revenues of this kingdom.

Actuated by the same principle of choice, he has now on the anvil another scheme, full of difficulty and desperate hazard, which totally alters the commercial relation of two kingdoms; and what end soever it shall have, may bequeath a legacy of heart-burning and discontent to one of the countries, perhaps to both, to be perpetuated to the latest posterity. This project is also undertaken on the hope of profit. It is provided, that out of some (I know not what) remains of the Irish hereditary revenue, a fund at some time, and of some sort, should be applied to the protection of the Irish trade. Here we are commanded again to task our faith, and to persuade ourselves, that out of the surplus of deficiency, out of the savings of habitual and systematic prodigality, the minister of wonders will provide support for this nation, sinking under the mountainous load of two hundred and thirty millions of debt. But whilst we look with pain at his desperate and laborious trifling; whilst we are apprehensive that he will break his back in stooping to pick up chaff and straws, he recovers himself at an elastic bound, and with a broad-cast swing of his arm, he squanders over his Indian field a sum far greater than the clear produce of the whole hereditary revenue of the kingdom of Ireland.*

Strange as this scheme of conduct in ministry is, and inconsistent with all just policy, it is still true to itself, and faithful to its own perverted order. Those who are bountiful to crimes, will be rigid to merit, and penurious to service. Their penury is even held out as a blind and cover to their prodigality. The oeconomy of injustice is, to furnish resources for the fund of corruption. Then they pay off their protection to great crimes and great criminals, by being inexorable to the paltry frailties of little men; and these modern flagellants are sure, with a rigid fidelity, to whip their own enormities on the vicarious back of every small offender.

It is to draw your attention to oeconomy of quite another order; it is to animadvert on offences of a far different description, that my honourable friend has brought before you the motion of this day. It is to perpetuate the abuses which are subverting the fabric of your empire, that the motion is opposed. It is therefore with reason (and if he has power to carry himself through, I commend his prudence) that the right honourable gentleman makes his stand at the very out-set; and boldly refuses all parliamentary information. Let him admit but one step towards inquiry, and he is undone. You must be ignorant, or he cannot be safe. But before his curtain is let down, and the shades of eternal night shall veil our eastern dominions from our view, permit me, Sir, to avail myself of the means which were furnished in anxious and inquisitive times, to demonstrate out of this single act of the present minister, what advantages you are to derive from permitting the greatest concern of this nation do be separated from the cognizance, and exempted even out of the competence, of parliament.

The greatest body of your revenue, your most numerous armies, your most important commerce, the richest sources of your public credit, (contrary to every idea of the known settled policy of England,) are on the point of being converted into a mystery of state. You are going to have one half of the globe hid even from the common liberal curiosity of an English gentleman. Here a grand revolution commences. Mark the period, and mark the circumstances. In most of the capital changes that are recorded in the principles and system of any government, a public benefit of some kind or other has been pretended. The revolution commenced in something plausible; in something which carried the appearance at least of punishment of delinquency, or correction of abuse. But here, in the very moment of the conversion of a department of British government into an Indian mystery, and in the very act in which the change commences, a corrupt, private interest is set up in direct opposition to the necessities of the nation. A diversion is made of millions of the public money from the public treasury to a private purse. It is not into secret negotiations for war, peace, or alliance, that the house of commons is forbidden to enquire. It is a matter

* The whole of the net Irish hereditary revenue is, on a medium of the last seven years, about £.230,000 yearly. The revenues of all denominations fall short more than £.150,000 yearly of the charges. On the *present* produce, if Mr. Pitt's scheme was to take place, he might gain from seven to ten thousand pounds a year.

of account; it is a pecuniary transaction; it is the demand of a suspected steward upon ruined tenants and an embarrassed master, that the commons of Great Britain are commanded not to inspect. The whole tenour of the right honourable gentleman's argument is consonant to the nature of his policy. The system of concealment is fostered by a system of falsehood. False facts, false colours, false names of persons and things, are its whole support.

Sir, I mean to follow the right honourable gentleman over that field of deception, clearing what he has purposely obscured, and fairly stating what it was necessary for him to misrepresent. For this purpose, it is necessary you should know with some degree of distinctness, a little of the locality, the nature, the circumstances, the magnitude of the pretended debts on which this marvellous donation is founded, as well as of the persons from whom and by whom it is claimed.

Madras, with its dependencies, is the second (but with a long interval, the second) member of the British empire in the east. The trade of that city, and of the adjacent territory, was, not very long ago, among the most flourishing in Asia. But since the establishment of the British power, it has wasted away under an uniform gradual decline; insomuch that in the year 1779 not one merchant of eminence was to be found in the whole country.* During this period of decay, about six hundred thousand sterling pounds a year have been drawn off by English gentleman on their private account, by the way of China alone.† If we add four hundred thousand, as probably remitted through other channels, and in other mediums, that is, in jewels, gold, and silver directly brought to Europe, and in bills upon the British and foreign companies, you will scarcely think the matter over-rated. If we fix the commencement of this extraction of money from the Carnatic at a period no earlier than the year 1760, and close it in the year 1780, it probably will not amount to a great deal less than twenty millions of money.

During the deep silent flow of this steady stream of wealth, which set from India into Europe, it generally passed on with no adequate observation; but happening at some periods to meet rifts of rocks that checked its course, it grew more noisy and attracted more notice. The pecuniary discussions caused by an accumulation of part of the fortunes of their servants in a debt from the nabob of Arcot, was the first thing which very particularly called for, and long engaged, the attention of the court of directors. This debt amounted to eight hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, and was claimed, for the greater part, by English gentlemen, residing at Madras. This grand capital, settled at length by order at ten *per cent.* afforded an annuity of eighty-eight thousand pounds.*

Whilst the directors were digesting their astonishment at this information, a memorial was presented to them from three gentlemen, informing them that their friends had lent likewise, to merchants of Canton in China, a sum of not more than one million sterling. In this memorial they called upon the company for their assistance and interposition with the Chinese government for the recovery of the debt. This sum lent to Chinese merchants, was at 24 *per cent.* which would yield, if paid, an annuity of two hundred and forty thousand pounds.†

Perplexed as the directors were with these demands, you may conceive, Sir, that they did not find themselves very much disembarrassed, by being made acquainted that they must again exert their influence for a new reserve of the happy parsimony of their servants, collected into a second debt from the nabob of Arcot, amounting to two millions four hundred thousand pounds, settled at an interest of 12 *per cent.* This is known by the name of the Consolidation of 1777, as the former of the nabob's debts was by the title of the Consolidation of 1767. To this was added, in a separate parcel, a little reserve called the Cavalry debt, of one hundred and sixty thousand pounds, at the same interest. The whole of these four capitals, amounting to four millions four hundred and forty thousand pounds, produced at their several rates, annuities amounting to six hundred and twenty-three thousand pounds a year; a good deal more than one-third of the clear land-tax of England, at four shillings in the pound; a good deal more than double the whole annual dividend of the East India company, the nominal masters to the proprietors in these funds. Of this interest, three hundred and eighty-three thousand two hundred pounds a year stood chargeable on the public revenues of the Carnatic.

* Mr. Smith's examination before the select committee, Appendix, No. 2.

† Appendix, No. 2.

* Fourth report, Mr. Dundas's committee, p. 4.

† A witness examined before the committee of secrecy says that eighteen *per cent.* was the usual interest; but he had heard that more had been given. The above is the account which Mr. B. received.

Sir, at this moment, it will not be necessary to consider the various operations which the capital and interest of this debt have successively undergone. I shall speak to these operations when I come particularly to answer the right honourable gentleman on each of the heads, as he has thought proper to divide them. But this was the exact view in which these debts first appeared to the court of directors, and to the world. It varied afterwards. But it never appeared in any other than a most questionable shape. When this gigantic phantom of debt first appeared before a young minister, it naturally would have justified some degree of doubt and apprehension. Such a prodigy would have filled any common man with superstitious fears. He would exorcise that shapeless, nameless form, and by every thing sacred would have adjured it to tell by what means a small number of slight individuals, of no consequence or situation, possessed of no lucrative offices, without the command of armies, or the known administration of revenues, without profession of any kind, without any sort of trade sufficient to employ a pedlar, could have, in a few years (as to some, even in a few months) amassed treasures equal to the revenues of a respectable kingdom? Was it not enough to put these gentlemen, in the noviciate of their administration, on their guard, and to call upon them for a strict inquiry (if not to justify them in a reprobation of those demands without any inquiry at all) that when all England, Scotland, and Ireland had for years been witness to the immense sums laid out by the servants of the company in stocks of all denominations, in the purchase of lands, in the buying and building of houses, in the securing quiet seats in parliament, or in the tumultuous riot of contested elections, in wandering throughout the whole range of those variegated modes of inventive prodigality, which sometimes have excited our wonder, sometimes roused our indignation; that after all India was four millions still in debt to *them?* India in debt to *them!* For what? Every debt for which an equivalent of some kind or other is not given, is on the face of it a fraud. What is the equivalent they have given? What equivalent had they to give? What are the articles of commerce, or the branches of manufacture which those gentlemen have carried hence to enrich India? What are the sciences they beamed out to enlighten it? What are the arts they introduced to cheer and to adorn it? What are the religious, what the moral institutions they have taught among that people as a guide to life, or as a consolation when life is to be no more, that there is an eternal debt, a debt "still paying still to owe," which must be bound on the present generation in India, and entailed on their mortgaged posterity for ever? A debt of millions, in favour of a set of men, whose names, with few exceptions, are either buried in the obscurity of their origin and talents, or dragged into light by the enormity of their crimes?

In my opinion the courage of the minister was the most wonderful part of the transaction, especially as he must have read, or rather the right honourable gentleman says, he has read for him, whole volumes upon the subject. The volumes, by the way, are not by one tenth part so numerous as the right honourable gentleman has thought proper to pretend, in order to frighten you from inquiry; but in these volumes, such as they are, the minister must have found a full authority for a suspicion (at the very least) of every thing relative to the great fortunes made at Madras. What is that authority? Why no other than the standing authority for all the claims which the ministry has thought fit to provide for—the grand debtor—the nabob of Arcot himself. Hear that prince, in the letter written to the court of directors, at the precise period, whilst the main body of these debts were contracting. In his letter he states himself to be, what undoubtedly he is, a most competent witness to this point. After speaking of the war with Hyder Ali in 1768 and 1769, and of other measures which he censures (whether right or wrong it signifies nothing) and into which he says he had been led by the company's servants; he proceeds in this manner—"If all these things were against the real interests of the company, they are ten thousand times more against mine, and against the prosperity of my country, and the happiness of my people; for your interests and mine are the same. *What were they owing to then? to the private views of a few individuals, who have enriched themselves at the expense of your influence, and of my country; for your servants* HAVE NO TRADE IN THIS COUNTRY; *neither do you pay them high wages, yet in a few years they return to England with many lacs of pagodas. How can you or I account for such immense fortunes acquired in so short a time, without any visible means of getting them?*"

When he asked this question, which involves its answer, it is extraordinary that curiosity did not prompt the chancellor of the exchequer to that inquiry, which might come in vain recommended to him by his own act of parliament. Does not the nabob of Arcot tell us in so many

words, that there was no fair way of making the enormous sums sent by the company's servants to England? and do you imagine that there was or could be more honesty and good faith, in the demands for what remained behind in India? Of what nature were the transactions with himself? If you follow the train of his information you must see, that if these great sums were at all lent, it was not property, but spoil that was lent; if not lent, the transaction was not a contract, but a fraud. Either way, if light enough could not be furnished to authorize a full condemnation of these demands, they ought to have been left to the parties, who best knew and understood each other's proceedings. It was not necessary that the authority of government should interpose in favour of claims, whose very foundation was a defiance of that authority, and whose object and end was its entire subversion.

It may be said that this letter was written by the nabob of Arcot in a moody humour, under the influence of some chagrin. Certainly it was; but it is in such humours that truth comes out. And when he tells you from his own knowledge, what every one must presume, from the extreme probability of the thing, whether he told it or not, one such testimony is worth a thousand that contradict that probability, when the parties have a better understanding with each other, and when they have a point to carry, that may unite them in a common deceit.

If this body of private claims of debt. real or devised, were a question, as it is falsely pretended, between the nabob of Arcot as debtor, and Paul Benfield and his associates as creditors, I am sure, I should give myself but little trouble about it. If the hoards of oppression were the fund for satisfying the claims of bribery and peculation, who would wish to interfere between such litigants? If the demands were confined to what might be drawn from the treasures, which the company's records uniformly assert that the nabob is in possession of; or if he had mines of gold or silver, or diamonds, (as we know that he has none,) these gentlemen might break open his hoards, or dig in his mines, without any disturbance from me. But the gentlemen on the other side of the house know as well as I do, and they dare not contradict me, that the nabob of Arcot and his creditors are not adversaries, but collusive parties, and that the whole transaction is under a false colour and false names. The litigation is not, nor ever has been, between their rapacity and his hoarded riches. No· it is between him and them combining and confederating on one side, and the public revenues, and the miserable inhabitants of a ruined country, on the other. These are the real plaintiffs and the real defendants in the suit. Refusing a shilling from his hoards for the satisfaction of any demand, the nabob of Arcot is always ready, nay, he earnestly, and with eagerness and passion, contends for delivering up to these pretended creditors his territory and his subjects. It is therefore not from treasuries and mines, but from the food of your unpaid armies, from the blood withheld from the veins, and whipt out of the backs of the most miserable of men, that we are to pamper extortion, usury, and peculation, under the false names of debtors and creditors of state.

The great patron of these creditors, (to whose honour they ought to erect statues,) the right honourable gentleman,* in stating the merits which recommended them to his favour, has ranked them under three grand divisions. The first, the creditors of 1767; then the creditors of the cavalry loan; and lastly, the creditors of the loan in 1777. Let us examine them, one by one, as they pass in review before us.

The first of these loans, that of 1767, he insists, has an indisputable claim upon the public justice. The creditors, he affirms, lent their money publicly; they advanced it with the express knowledge and approbation of the company; and it was contracted at the moderate interest of ten *per cent*. In this loan the demand is, according to him, not only just, but meritorious in a very high degree; and one would be inclined to believe he thought so, because he has put it last in the provision he has made for these claims.

I readily admit this debt to stand the fairest of the whole; for whatever may be my suspicions concerning a part of it, I can convict it of nothing worse than the most enormous usury. But I can convict upon the spot the right honourable gentleman, of the most daring misrepresentation in every one fact, without any exception, that he has alleged in defence of this loan, and of his own conduct with regard to it. I will shew you that this debt was never contracted with the knowledge of the company; that it had not their approbation; that they received the first intelligence of it with the utmost possible surprise, indignation, and alarm.

So far from being previously apprized of the transaction from its origin, it was two years before the court of directors obtained any official intelligence of it. "The dealings of the

* Mr. Dundas.

servants with the nabob were concealed from the first, until they were found out," (says Mr. Sayer, the company's counsel,) "by the report of the country." The presidency, however, at last thought proper to send an official account. On this the directors tell them, "to your great reproach it has been *concealed from us*. We cannot but suspect this debt to have had its weight in *your proposed aggrandisement of Mahomed Ali*, [the nabob of Arcot;] but whether it has or has not, certain it is, you are guilty of an high breach of duty in *concealing* it from us."

These expressions, concerning the ground of the transaction, its effect, and its clandestine nature, are in the letters, bearing date March 17, 1769. After receiving a more full account on the 23d March, 1770, they state, that "Messrs. John Pybus, John Call, and James Bourchier, as trustees for themselves and others of the nabob's private creditors, had proved a deed of assignment upon the nabob and his son of FIFTEEN districts of the nabob's country, the revenues of which yielded, in time of peace, eight lacs of pagodas [£.320,000 sterling] annually; and likewise an assignment of the yearly tribute paid the nabob from the rajah of Tanjore, amounting to four lacs of rupees, [£.40,000."] The territorial revenue, at that time possessed by these gentlemen, without the knowledge or consent of their masters, amounted to three hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling annually. They were making rapid strides to the entire possession of the country, when the directors, whom the right honourable gentleman states as having authorized these proceedings, were kept in such profound ignorance of this royal acquisition of territorial revenue by their servants, that in the same letter they say, "this assignment was obtained by *three of the members of your board*, in January 1767, yet we do not find the *least trace* of it upon your consultations, until August 1768, nor do any of your letters to us afford any information relative to such transactions, till the 1st of November, 1768. By your last letters of the 8th of May, 1769, you bring the whole proceedings to light in one view."

As to the previous knowledge of the company, and its sanction to the debts, you see that this assertion of that knowledge is utterly unfounded. But did the directors approve of it, and ratify the transaction when it was known? The very reverse. On the same 3d of March, the directors declare, "upon an *impartial examination* of the whole conduct of our late governour and council of Fort George (Madras) and on the fullest consideration, that the said governour and council have, in *notorious violation of the trust* reposed in them, manifestly *preferred the interest of private individuals to that of the company*, in permitting the assignment of the revenues of certain valuable districts, to a very large amount, from the nabob to individuals,"—and then highly aggravating their crimes, they add "we order and direct that you do examine, in the most impartial manner, all the above-mentioned transactions; and that you *punish* by suspension, degradation, dismission, or otherwise, as to you shall seem meet, all and every such servant or servants of the company, who may by you be found guilty of any of the above offences." "We had (say the directors) the mortification to find that the servants of the company, who had been *raised, supported, and owed their present opulence to the advantages* gained in such service, have in this instance most *unfaithfully betrayed* their trust, *abandoned* the company's interest, and *prostituted* its influence to accomplish the *purposes of individuals, whilst the interest of the company is almost wholly neglected*, and payment to us rendered extremely precarious." Here then is the rock of approbation of the court of directors, on which the right honourable gentleman says this debt was founded. Any member, Mr. Speaker, who should come into the house, on my reading this sentence of condemnation of the court of directors against their unfaithful servants, might well imagine that he had heard an harsh, severe, unqualified invective against the present ministerial board of controul. So exactly do the proceedings of the patrons of this abuse tally with those of the actors in it, that the expressions used in the condemnation of the one, may serve for the reprobation of the other, without the change of a word.

To read you all the expressions of wrath and indignation fulminated in this dispatch against the meritorious creditors of the right honourable gentleman, who according to him have been so fully approved by the company, would be to read the whole.

The right honourable gentleman, with an address peculiar to himself, every now and then slides in the presidency of Madras, as synonymous to the company. That the presidency did approve the debt, is certain. But the right honourable gentleman, as prudent in suppressing, as skilful in bringing forward his matter, has not chosen to tell you that the presidency were the very persons guilty of contracting this loan; creditors themselves, and agents and trustees for all the other creditors. For this the court of directors accuse them of

breach of trust; and for this the right honourable gentleman considers them as perfectly good authority for those claims. It is pleasant to hear a gentleman of the law quote the approbation of creditors as an authority for their own debt.

How they came to contract the debt to themselves, how they came to act as agents for those whom they ought to have controuled, is for your inquiry. The policy of this debt was announced to the court of directors, by the very persons concerned in creating it. "Till very lately," (say the presidency,) "the nabob placed his dependence on the company. Now he has been taught by ill advisers, that an interest out of doors may stand him in good stead. He has been made to believe that *his private creditors have power and interest to over-rule the court of directors.*"* The nabob was not misinformed. The private creditors instantly qualified a vast number of votes; and having made themselves masters of the court of proprietors, as well as extending a powerful cabal in other places as important, they so completely overturned the authority of the court of directors at home and abroad, that this poor baffled government was soon obliged to lower its tone. It was glad to be admitted into partnership with its own servants. The court of directors establishing the debt which they had reprobated as a breach of trust, and which was planned for the subversion of their authority, settled its payments on a par with those of the public; and even so, were not able to obtain peace or even equality in their demands. All the consequences lay in a regular and irresistible train. By employing their influence for the recovery of this debt, their orders, issued in the same breath, against creating new debts, only animated the strong desires of their servants to this prohibited prolific sport, and it soon produced a swarm of sons and daughters, not in the least degenerated from the virtue of their parents.

From that moment, the authority of the court of directors expired in the Carnatic, and every where else. "Every man," says the presidency, "who opposes the government and its measures, finds an immediate countenance from the nabob; even our discarded officers, however unworthy, are received into the nabob's service."* It was indeed a matter of no wonderful sagacity to determine whether the court of directors, with their miserable salaries to their servants, of four or five hundred pounds a year, or the distributor of millions, was most likely to be obeyed. It was an invention beyond the imagination of all the speculatists of our speculating age, to see a government quietly settled in one and the same town, composed of two distinct members; one to pay scantily for obedience, and the other to bribe high for rebellion and revolt.

The next thing which recommends this particular debt to the right honourable gentleman is, it seems, the moderate interest of ten *per cent.* It would be lost labour to observe on this assertion. The nabob, in a long apologetic letter† for the transaction between him and the body of the creditors, states the fact, as I shall state it to you. In the accumulation of this debt, the first interest paid was from thirty to thirty-six *per cent.* it was then brought down to twenty-five *per cent.* at length it was reduced to twenty; and there it found its rest. During the whole process, as often as any of these monstrous interests fell into an arrear, (into which they were continually falling,) the arrear, formed into a new capital,‡ was added to the old, and the same interest of twenty *per cent.* accrued upon both. The company, having got some scent of the enormous usury which prevailed at Madras, thought it necessary to interfere, and to order all interests to be lowered to ten *per cent.* This order, which contained no exception, though it by no means pointed particularly to this class of debts, came like a thunder-clap on the nabob. He con-

* For the threats of the creditors, and total subversion of the authority of the company in favour of the nabob's power, and the increase thereby of his evil dispositions, and the great derangement of all public concerns, see select committee Fort St. George's letters, 21st November, 1769, and January 31st, 1770; September 11th, 1772. And Governour Bourchier's letters to the nabob of Arcot, 21st November, 1769, and December 9th, 1769.

* "He [the nabob] is in a great degree the cause of our present inability; by diverting the revenues of the Carnatic through *private channels.*"—"Even this Peshcush [the Tanjore tribute] circumstanced as he and we are, he has assigned over to others, *who now set themselves in opposition to the company.*" Consultations, October 11, 1769, on the 12th communicated to the nabob.

† Nabob's letter to Governour Palk. Papers published by the directors in 1775; and papers printed by the same authority, 1781.

‡ See papers printed by order of a general court in 1780, p. 222, and p. 224, as also nabob's letter to Governour Dupre, 19th July, 1771, "I have taken up loans by which I have suffered a loss of *upwards of a crore of pagodas* [four millions sterling] *by interest on an heavy interest.*"—Letter 15th January, 1772, "Notwithstanding I have taken much trouble, and have made many payments to my creditors, yet the load of my debt, *which became so great, by interest and compound interest,* is not cleared."

sidered his political credit as ruined; but to find a remedy to this unexpected evil, he again added to the old principal twenty *per cent.* interest accruing for the last year. Thus a new fund was formed; and it was on that accumulation of various principals, and interests heaped upon interests, not on the sum originally lent, as the right honourable gentleman would make you believe, that ten *per cent.* was settled on the whole.

When you consider the enormity of the interest at which these debts were contracted, and the several interests added to the principal, I believe you will not think me so sceptical, if I should doubt, whether for this debt of £.880,000 the nabob ever saw £.100,000 in real money. The right honourable gentleman suspecting, with all his absolute dominion over fact, that he never will be able to defend even this venerable patriarchal job, though sanctified by its numerous issue, and hoary with prescriptive years, has recourse to recrimination, the last resource of guilt. He says that this loan of 1767 was provided for in Mr. Fox's India bill; and judging of others by his own nature and principles, he more than insinuates, that this provision was made, not from any sense of merit in the claim, but from partiality to General Smith, a proprietor, and an agent for that debt. If partiality could have had any weight against justice and policy, with the then ministers and their friends, General Smith had titles to it. But the right honourable gentleman knows as well as I do, that General Smith was very far from looking on himself as partially treated in the arrangements of that time; indeed what man dared to hope for private partiality in that sacred plan for relief to nations?

It is not necessary that the right honourable gentleman should sarcastically call that time to our recollection. Well do I remember every circumstance of that memorable period. God forbid I should forget it. O illustrious disgrace! O victorious defeat! may your memorial be fresh and new to the latest generations! May the day of that generous conflict be stamped in characters never to be cancelled or worn out from the records of time! Let no man hear of us, who shall not hear that in a struggle against the intrigues of courts, and the perfidious levity of the multitude, we fell in the cause of honour, in the cause of our country, in the cause of human nature itself! But if fortune should be as powerful over fame, as she has been prevalent over virtue, at least our conscience is beyond her jurisdiction. My poor share in the support of that great measure, no man shall ravish from me. It shall be safely lodged in the sanctuary of my heart; never, never to be torn from thence, but with those holds that grapple it to life.

I say, I well remember that bill, and every one of its honest and its wise provisions. It is not true that this debt was ever protected or enforced, or any revenue whatsoever set apart for it. It was left in that bill just where it stood; to be paid or not to be paid out of the nabob's private treasures, according to his own discretion. The company had actually given it their sanction; though always relying for its validity on the sole security of the faith of him,* who without their knowledge or consent entered into the original obligation. It had no other sanction; it ought to have had no other. So far was Mr. Fox's bill from providing *funds* for it, as this ministry have wickedly done for this, and for ten times worse transactions, out of the public estate, that an express clause immediately preceded, positively forbidding any British subject from receiving assignments upon any part of the territorial revenue, on any pretence whatsoever.†

You recollect, Mr. Speaker, that the chancellor of the exchequer strongly professed to retain every part of Mr. Fox's bill which was intended to prevent abuse; but in *his* India bill, which (let me do justice) is as able and skilful a performance for its own purposes, as ever issued from the wit of man, premeditating this iniquity—*hoc ipsum ut strueret Trojamque aperiret Achivis*, expunged this essential clause, broke down the fence which was raised to cover the public property against the rapacity of his partisans, and thus levelling every obstruction, he made a firm, broad, highway for sin and death, for usury and oppression, to renew their ravages throughout the devoted revenues of the Carnatic.

The tenour, the policy, and the consequences of this debt of 1767, are, in the eyes of ministry, so excellent, that its merits are irresistible; and it takes the lead to give credit and countenance to all the rest. Along with his chosen body of heavy-armed infantry, and to support it, in the line, the right honourable gentleman has stationed his corps of black cavalry. If there be any advantage between this debt and that of 1769, according to him the cavalry debt has it. It is not a subject of defence; it is a theme of panegyric. Listen to the right honourable gentleman, and you will find it was contracted to save the country; to prevent

* The nabob of Arcot.
† Appendix, No. 3.

mutiny in armies; to introduce œconomy in revenues; and for all these honourable purposes, it originated at the express desire, and by the representative authority of the company itself.

First, let me say a word to the authority. This debt was contracted not by the authority of the company, not by its representatives, (as the right honourable gentleman has the unparalleled confidence to assert,) but in the ever-memorable period of 1777, by the usurped power of those who rebelliously, in conjunction with the nabob of Arcot, had overturned the lawful government of Madras. For that rebellion, this house unanimously directed a public prosecution. The delinquents, after they had subverted government, in order to make to themselves a party to support them in their power, are universally known to have dealt jobs about to the right and to the left, and to any who were willing to receive them. This usurpation, which the right honourable gentleman well knows, was brought about by and for the great mass of these pretended debts, is the authority which is set up by him to represent the company; to represent that company which from the first moment of their hearing of this corrupt and fraudulent transaction, to this hour, have uniformly disowned and disavowed it.

So much for the authority. As to the facts, partly true, and partly colourable, as they stand recorded, they are in substance these.—The nabob of Arcot, as soon as he had thrown off the superiority of this country by means of these creditors, kept up a great army which he never paid. Of course, his soldiers were generally in a state of mutiny.* The usurping council say that they laboured hard with their master the nabob, to persuade him to reduce these mutinous and useless troops. He consented; but as usual, pleaded inability to pay them their arrears. Here was a difficulty. The nabob had no money; the company had no money; every public supply was empty. But there was one resource which no season has ever yet dried up in that climate. The *soucars* were at hand; that is, private English money-jobbers offered their assistance. Messieurs Taylor, Majendie and Call, proposed to advance the small sum of £.160,000 to pay off the nabob's black cavalry, provided the company's authority was given for their loan. This was the great point of policy always aimed at, and pursued through a hundred devices by the servants at Madras. The presidency, who themselves had no authority for the functions they presumed to exercise. very readily gave the sanction of the company to those servants who knew that the company, whose sanction was demanded, had positively prohibited all such transactions.

However, so far as the reality of the dealing goes, all is hitherto fair and plausible; and here the right honourable gentleman concludes, with commendable prudence, his account of the business. But here it is I shall beg leave to commence my supplement: for the gentleman's discreet modesty has led him to cut the thread of the story somewhat abruptly. One of the most essential parties is quite forgotten. Why should the episode of the poor nabob be omitted? When that prince chooses it, nobody can tell his story better. Excuse me, if I apply again to my book, and give it you from the first hand; from the nabob himself.

"Mr. Stratton became acquainted with this, and got Mr. Taylor and others to lend me four lacs of pagodas towards discharging the arrears of pay of my troops. Upon this, I wrote a letter of thanks to Mr. Stratton; and upon the faith of this money being paid immediately, I ordered many of my troops to be discharged by a certain day, and lessened the number of my servants. Mr. Taylor, &c. some time after acquainted me, that they had no ready money, but they would grant teeps payable in four months. This astonished me; for I did not know what might happen, when the sepoys were dismissed from my service. I begged of Mr. Taylor and the others to pay this sum to the officers of my regiments at the time they mentioned; and desired the officers, at the same time, to pacify and persuade the men belonging to them, that their pay would be given to them *at the end of four months*; and that till those arrears were discharged, their pay should be continued to them. *Two years* are nearly expired since that time, but Mr. Taylor has not yet entirely discharged the arrears of those troops, and I am obliged to continue their pay from that time till this. I hoped to have been able, by this expedient, to have lessened the number of my troops, and discharged the arrears due to them, considering the trifle of interest to Mr. Taylor, and the others, as no great matter; but instead of this, *I am oppressed with the burthen of pay due to those troops; and the interest, which is going on to Mr. Taylor from the day the teeps were granted to him.*" What I have read to you is an extract of a letter from the Carnatic to Governour Rumbold, dated the 22d, and received the 24th of March, 1779.*

* See Mr. Dundas's 1st, 2d and 3d, reports.

* See further Consultations, 3d February, 1778

Suppose his highness not to be well broken in to things of this kind, it must indeed surprise so known and established a bond-vender, as the nabob of Arcot, one who keeps himself the largest bond warehouse in the world, to find that he was now to receive in kind; not to take money for his obligations, but to give his bond in exchange for the bond of Messieurs Taylor, Majendie and Call, and to pay besides, a good smart interest, legally 12 *per cent.* (in reality perhaps twenty, or twenty-four *per cent.*) for this exchange of paper. But his troops were not to be so paid, or so disbanded. They wanted bread, and could not live by cutting and shuffling of bonds. The nabob still kept the troops in service, and was obliged to continue, as you have seen, the whole expense, to exonerate himself from which he became indebted to the soucars.

Had it stood here, the transaction would have been of the most audacious strain of fraud and usury, perhaps ever before discovered, whatever might have been practised and concealed. But the same authority (I mean the nabob's) brings before you something if possible more striking. He states, that for this their paper, he immediately handed over to these gentlemen something very different from paper; that is, the receipt of a territorial revenue, of which it seems they continued as long in possession as the nabob himself continued in possession of any thing. Their payments therefore not being to commence before the end of four months, and not being completed in two years, it must be presumed (unless they proved the contrary) that their payments to the nabob were made out of the revenues they had received from his assignment. Thus they condescended to accumulate a debt of £.160,000 with an interest of 12 *per cent.* in compensation for a lingering payment to the nabob of £.160,000 of his own money.

Still we have not the whole: about two years after the assignment of those territorial revenues to these gentlemen, the nabob receives a remonstrance from his chief manager, in a principal province, of which this is the tenour —"The *entire* revenue of those districts is by your highness's order set apart to discharge the tuncaws [assignments] granted to the Europeans. The gomastahs [agents] of Mr. Taylor, to Mr. De Fries, are there in order to collect those tuncaws; and as they receive *all* the revenue that is collected, your highness's troops have *seven or eight months pay due*, which they cannot receive, and are thereby reduced to the greatest *distress*. *In such times*, it is highly necessary to provide for the sustenance of the troops that they may be ready to exert themselves in the service of your highness."

Here, Sir, you see how these causes and effects act upon one another. One body of troops mutinies for want of pay; a debt is contracted to pay them; and they still remain unpaid. A territory destined to pay other troops, is assigned for this debt; and these other troops fall into the same state of indigence and mutiny with the first. Bond is paid by bond; arrear is turned into new arrear; usury engenders new usury; mutiny suspended in one quarter, starts up in another; until all the revenues, and all the establishments are entangled into one inextricable knot of confusion, from which they are only disengaged by being entirely destroyed. In that state of confusion, in a very few months after the date of the memorial I have just read to you, things were found, when the nabob's troops, famished to feed English soucars, instead of defending the country, joined the invaders, and deserted in entire bodies to Hyder Ali.*

The manner in which this transaction was carried on, shews that good examples are not easily forgot, especially by those who are bred in a great school. One of those splendid examples give me leave to mention, at a somewhat more early period, because one fraud furnishes light to the discovery of another, and so on, until the whole secret of mysterious iniquity bursts upon you in a blaze of detection. The paper I shall read you, is not on record. If you please you may take it on my word. It is a letter written from one of undoubted information in Madras, to Sir John Clavering, describing the practice that prevailed there, whilst the company's allies were under sale, during the time of Governour Winch's administration.

"—— One mode," says Clavering's correspondent, "of amassing money at the nabob's cost is curious. He is generally in arrears to the company. Here the governour, being cash-keeper, is generally on good terms with the banker, who manages matters thus: the governour presses the nabob for the balance due from him; the nabob flies to his banker for relief; the banker engages to pay the money, and grants his notes accordingly, which he puts in the cash-book as ready money; the nabob pays him an interest for it at *two and three per cent. per mensem*, till the tuncaws he grants on the particular districts for it are paid. Matters in

* Mr Dundas's 1st report, p. 26, 29, and Appendix, No. 2, 10, 18, for the mutinous state and desertion of the nabob's troops for want of pay. See also report 4, of the same committee.

the mean time are so managed, that there is no call for this money for the company's service, till the tunkaws become due. By this means not a cash is advanced by the banker, though he receives a heavy interest from the nabob, which is divided as lawful spoil."

Here, Mr. Speaker, you have the whole art and mystery, the true free-mason secret of the profession of *soucaring*; by which a few innocent, inexperienced young Englishmen, such as Mr. Paul Benfield, for instance, without property upon which any one would lend to themselves a single shilling, are enabled at once to take provinces in mortgage, to make princes their debtors, and to become creditors for millions.

But it seems the right honourable gentleman's favourite soucar cavalry, have proved the payment before the mayor's court at Madras! Have they so? Why then defraud our anxiety and their characters of that proof? Is it not enough that the charges which I have laid before you, have stood on record against these poor injured gentlemen for eight years? Is it not enough that they are in print by the orders of the East India company for five years? After these gentlemen have borne all the odium of this publication, and all the indignation of the directors, with such unexampled equanimity, now that they are at length stimulated into feeling, are you to deny them their just relief? But will the right honourable gentleman be pleased to tell us, how they came not to give this satisfaction to the court of directors, their lawful masters, during all the eight years of this litigated claim? Were they not bound, by every tie that can bind man, to give them this satisfaction? This day, for the first time, we hear of the proofs. But when were these proofs offered? In what cause? Who were the parties? Who inspected? Who contested this belated account? Let us see something to oppose to the body of record which appears against them. The mayor's court! the mayor's court! Pleasant! Does not the honourable gentleman know, that the first corps of creditors (the creditors of 1767) stated it as a sort of hardship to them, that they could not have justice at Madras, from the impossibility of their supporting their claims in the mayor's court? Why? because, say they, the members of that court were themselves creditors, and therefore could not sit as judges.* Are we ripe to say that no creditor under similar circumstances was member of the court, when the payment which is the ground of this cavalry debt was put in proof?* Nay, are we not in a manner compelled to conclude, that the court was so constituted, when we know there is scarcely a man in Madras, who has not some participation in these transactions? It is a shame to hear such proofs mentioned, instead of the honest vigorous scrutiny which the circumstances of such an affair so indispensably calls for.

But his majesty's ministers, indulgent enough to other scrutinies, have not been satisfied with authorising the payment of this demand without such inquiry as the act has prescribed; but they have added the arrear of twelve *per cent.* interest, from the year 1777 to the year 1784, to make a new capital, raising thereby 160 to £.294,000. Then they charge a new twelve *per cent.* on the whole from that period, for a transaction, in which it will be a miracle if a single penny will be ever found really advanced from the private stock of the pretended creditors.

In this manner, and at such an interest, the ministers have thought proper to dispose of £.294,000 of the public revenues, for what is called the *cavalry loan*. After dispatching this, the right honourable gentleman leads to battle his last grand division, the consolidated debt of 1777. But having exhausted all his panegyric on the two first, he has nothing at all to say in favour of the last. On the contrary, he admits that it was contracted in defiance of the company's orders, without even the pretended sanction of any pretended representatives. Nobody, indeed, has yet been found hardy enough to stand forth avowedly in its defence. But it is little to the credit of the age, that what has not plausibility enough to find an advocate, has influence enough to obtain a protector. Could any man expect to find that protector any where? But what must every man think, when he finds that protector in the chairman of the committee of secrecy,† who had published to the house, and to the world, the facts that condemn these

* Memorial from the creditors to the governour and council, 22d January 1770.

* In the year 1779, Mr. James Call, one of the proprietors of this specific debt, was actually mayor. Appendix to 2d report of Mr. Dundas's committee, No. 65.—The only proof which appeared on the inquiry instituted in the general court of 1781, was an affidavit of the *lenders themselves*, deposing (what nobody ever denied) that they had *engaged* and *agreed* to pay—not that they *had* paid the sum of £.160,000. This was two years after the transaction; and the affidavit is made before George Proctor, mayor, an attorney for certain of the old creditors. Proceedings of the president and council of Fort Saint George, 22d February, 1779.

† Right honourable Henry Dundas.

debts—the orders that forbid the incurring of them—the dreadful consequences which attended them. Even in his official letter, when he tramples on his parliamentary report, yet his general language is the same. Read the preface to this part of the ministerial arrangement, and you would imagine that this debt was to be crushed, with all the weight of indignation which could fall from a vigilant guardian of the public treasury, upon those who attempted to rob it. What must be felt by every man who has feeling, when, after such a thundering preamble of condemnation, this debt is ordered to be paid without any sort of inquiry into its authenticity? without a single step taken to settle even the amount of the demand? without an attempt so much as to ascertain the real persons claiming a sum, which rises in the accounts from one million three hundred thousand pound sterling to two million four hundred thousand pound principal money? * without an attempt made to ascertain the proprietors, of whom no list has ever yet been laid before the court of directors; of proprietors who are known to be in a collusive shuffle, by which they never appear to be the same in any two lists, handed about for their own particular purposes?

My honourable friend who made you the motion, has sufficiently exposed the nature of this debt. He has stated to you that *its own agents* in the year 1781, in the arrangement *they proposed* to make at Calcutta, were satisfied to have twenty-five *per cent.* at once struck off from the capital of a great part of this debt; and prayed to have a provision made for this reduced principal, without any interest at all. This was an arrangement of their *own*, an arrangement made by those who best knew the true constitution of their own debt; who knew how little favour it merited,† and how little hopes they had to find any persons in authority abandoned enough to support it as it stood.

But what corrupt men, in the fond imaginations of a sanguine avarice, had not the confidence to propose, they have found a chancellor of the exchequer in England hardy enough to undertake for them. He has cheered their drooping spirits. He has thanked the peculators for not despairing of their commonwealth. He has told them they were too modest. He has replaced the twenty-five *per cent.* which, in order to lighten themselves they had abandoned in their conscious terrour. Instead of cutting off the interest, as they had themselves consented to do, with the fourth of the capital, he has added the whole growth of four years usury of twelve *per cent.* to the first overgrown principal; and has again grafted on this meliorated stock a perpetual annuity of six *per cent.* to take place from the year 1781. Let no man hereafter talk of the decaying energies of nature. All the acts and monuments in the records of peculation; the consolidated corruption of ages; the patterns of exemplary plunder in the heroic times of Roman iniquity, never equalled the gigantic corruption of this single act. Never did Nero, in all the insolent prodigality of despotism, deal out to his prætorian guards a donation fit to be named with the largess showered down by the bounty of our chancellor of the exchequer on the faithful band of his Indian sepoys.

The right honourable gentleman* lets you freely and voluntarily into the whole transaction. So perfectly has his conduct confounded his understanding, that he fairly tells you, that through the course of the whole business he has never conferred with any but the agents of the pretended creditors. After this, do you want more to establish a secret understanding with the parties? to fix, beyond a doubt, their collusion and participation in a common fraud?

If this were not enough, he has furnished you with other presumptions that are not to be shaken. It is one of the known indications of guilt to stagger and prevaricate in a story; and to vary in the motives that are assigned to conduct. Try these ministers by this rule. In their official dispatch, they tell the presidency of Madras, that they have established the debt for two reasons; first, because the nabob (the party indebted) does not dispute it; secondly, because it is mischievous to keep it longer afloat; and that the payment of the European creditors will promote circulation in the country. These two motives (for the

* Appendix to the 4th report of Mr. Dundas's committee, No. 15.

† "No sense of the common danger, in case of a war, can prevail on him [the nabob of Arcot] to furnish the company with what is absolutely necessary to assemble an army, though it is beyond a doubt, that money to a large amount is now hoarded up in his coffers at Chepauk; and tuncaws are granted to *individuals* upon some of his most *valuable countries*, for payment of part of those debts which he has contracted, and *which certainly will not bear inspection, as neither debtor nor creditors have ever had the confidence to submit the accounts to our examination*, though they expressed a wish to consolidate the debts under the auspices of this government, agreeably to a plan they had formed." Madras Consultations, 20th July, 1778. Mr. Dundas's Appendix to 2d Report, 143. See also last Appendix to ditto Report, No. 276 B.

* Mr. Dundas.

plainest reasons in the world) the right honourable gentleman has this day thought fit totally to abandon. In the first place, he rejects the authority of the nabob of Arcot. It would indeed be pleasant to see him adhere to this exploded testimony. He next, upon grounds equally solid, abandons the benefits of that circulation, which was to be produced by drawing out all the juices of the body. Laying aside, or forgetting these pretences of his dispatch, he has just now assumed a principle totally different, but to the full as extraordinary. He proceeds upon a supposition, that many of the claims may be fictitious. He then finds, that in a case where many valid and many fraudulent claims are blended together, the best course for their discrimination is indiscriminately to establish them all. He trusts (I suppose) as there may not be a fund sufficient for every description of creditors, that the best warranted claimants will exert themselves in bringing to light those debts which will not bear an inquiry. What he will not do himself, he is persuaded will be done by others; and for this purpose he leaves to any person a general power of excepting to the debt. This total change of language and prevarication in principle, is enough, if it stood alone, to fix the presumption of unfair dealing. His dispatch assigns motives of policy, concord, trade, and circulation. His speech proclaims discord and litigation; and proposes, as the ultimate end, detection.

But he may shift his reasons, and wind, and turn as he will, confusion waits him at all his doubles. Who will undertake this detection? Will the nabob? But the right honourable gentleman has himself this moment told us, that no prince of the country can by any motive be prevailed upon to discover any fraud that is practised upon him by the company's servants. He says what (with the exception of the complaint against the cavalry loan) all the world knows to be true: and without that prince's concurrence, what evidence can be had of the fraud of any the smallest of these demands? The ministers never authorized any person to enter into his exchequer, and to search his records. Why then this shameful and insulting mockery of a pretended contest? Already contests for a preference have arisen among these rival bond creditors. Has not the company itself struggled for a preference for years, without any attempt at detection of the nature of those debts with which they contended? Well is the nabob of Arcot attended to in the only specific complaint he has ever made. He complained of unfair dealing in the cavalry loan. It is fixed upon him with interest on interest; and this loan is excepted from all power of litigation.

This day, and not before, the right honourable gentleman thinks that the general establishment of all claims is the surest way of laying open the fraud of some of them. In India this is a reach of deep policy. But what would be thought of this mode of acting on a demand upon the treasury in England? Instead of all this cunning, is there not one plain way open, that is, to put the burthen of the proof on those who make the demand? Ought not ministry to have said to the creditors, "The person who admits your debt stands excepted to as evidence; he stands charged as a collusive party, to hand over the public revenues to you for sinister purposes? You say, you have a demand of some millions on the Indian treasury; prove that you have acted by lawful authority; prove at least that your money has been *bonâ fide* advanced; entitle yourself to my protection, by the fairness and fulness of the communications you make." Did an honest creditor ever refuse that reasonable and honest test?

There is little doubt, that several individuals have been seduced by the purveyors to the nabob of Arcot, to put their money (perhaps the whole of honest and laborious earnings) into their hands, and that at such high interest, as, being condemned at law, leaves them at the mercy of the great managers whom they trusted. These seduced creditors are probably persons of no power or interest, either in England or India, and may be just objects of compassion. By taking, in this arrangement, no measures for discrimination and discovery, the fraudulent and the fair are in the first instance confounded in one mass. The subsequent selection and distribution is left to the nabob. With him the agents and instruments of his corruption, whom he sees to be omnipotent in England, and who may serve him in future, as they have done in times past, will have precedence, if not an exclusive preference. These leading interests domineer, and have always domineered, over the whole. By this arrangement, the persons seduced are made dependent on their seducers; honesty (comparative honesty at least) must become of the party of fraud, and must quit its proper character, and its just claims, to entitle itself to the alms of bribery and peculation.

But be these English creditors what they may, the creditors, most certainly not fraudulent, are the natives, who are numerous and wretched indeed: by exhausting the whole

revenues of the Carnatic, nothing is left for them. They lent *bonâ fide;* in all probability they were even forced to lend, or to give goods and service for the nabob's obligations. They had no trusts to carry to his market. They had no faith of alliances to sell. They had no nations to betray to robbery and ruin. They had no lawful government seditiously to overturn; nor had they a governour, to whom it is owing that you exist in India, to deliver over to captivity, and to death, in a shameful prison.*

These were the merits of the principal part of the debt of 1777, and the universally conceived causes of its growth; and thus the unhappy natives are deprived of every hope of payment for their real debts, to make provision for the arrears of unsatisfied bribery and treason. You see in this instance, that the presumption of guilt is not only no exception to the demands on the public treasury; but with these ministers it is a necessary condition to their support. But that you may not think this preference solely owing to their known contempt of the natives, who ought with every generous mind to claim their first charities; you will find the same rule religiously observed with Europeans too. Attend, Sir, to this decisive case.—Since the beginning of the war, besides arrears of every kind, a bond debt has been contracted at Madras, uncertain in its amount, but represented from four hundred thousand pounds to a million sterling. It stands only at the low interest of eight *per cent.* Of the legal authority on which this debt was contracted, of its purposes for the very being of the state, of its publicity and fairness, no doubt has been entertained for a moment. For this debt, no sort of provision whatever has been made. It is rejected as an outcast, whilst the whole undissipated attention of the minister has been employed for the discharge of claims entitled to his favour by the merits we have seen.

I have endeavoured to find out, if possible, the amount of the whole of those demands, in order to see how much, supposing the country in a condition to furnish the fund, may remain to satisfy the public debt and the necessary establishments. But I have been foiled in my attempt. About one-fourth, that is about £.220,000 of the loan of 1767, remains unpaid. How much interest is in arrear, I could never discover; seven or eight years at least, which would make the whole of that debt about £.396,000. This stock, which the ministers in their instructions to the governour of Madras state as the least exceptionable, they have thought proper to distinguish by a marked severity, leaving it the only one, on which the interest is not added to the principal, to beget a new interest.

The cavalry loan, by the operation of the same authority, is made up to £.294,000, and this £.294,000 made up of principal and interest, is crowned with a new interest of twelve *per cent.*

What the grand loan, the bribery loan of 1777, may be, is among the deepest mysteries of state. It is probably the first debt ever assuming the title of consolidation, that did not express what the amount of the sum consolidated was. It is little less than a contradiction in terms. In the debt of the year 1767, the sum was stated in the act of consolidation, and made to amount to £.880,000 capital. When this consolidation of 1777 was first announced at the Durbar, it was represented authentically at £.2,400,000. In that, or rather in a higher state, Sir Thomas Rumbold found and condemned it.* It afterwards fell into such a terrour, as to sweat away a million of its weight at once; and it sunk to £.1,400,000.† However, it never was without

* Lord Pigot.

* In Sir Thomas Rumbold's letter to the court of directors, March 15th, 1778, he represents it as higher, in the following manner:—"How shall I paint to you my astonishment on my arrival here, when I was informed that independent of this four lacs of pagodas, [the cavalry loan:] independent of the nabob's debt to his old creditors, and the money due to the company; he had contracted a debt to the enormous amount of sixty-three lacs of pagodas, [£2,520,000.] I mention this circumstance to you *with horrour;* for the creditors being in general *servants of the company,* renders my task on the part of the company, *difficult and invidious.*"—"I have freed the sanction of this government from *so corrupt* a transaction. It is in my mind the most venal of all proceedings, to give the company's protection to debts that cannot bear the light; and though it appears exceedingly alarming, that a country, on which you are to depend for resources, should be so involved, as to be nearly three years' revenue in debt; in a country too, where one year's revenue can never be called *secure,* by men who know any thing of the politics of this part of India."—"I think it proper to mention to you, that although the *nabob reports his private debt to amount to upwards of sixty lacs,* yet I understand that it is not quite so much." Afterwards Sir Thomas Rumbold recommended this debt to the favourable attention of the company, but without any sufficient reason for his change of disposition. However he went no further.

† Nabob's proposals, November 28th, 1778; and memorial of the creditors, March 1st, 1799.

a resource for recruiting it to its old plumpness. There was a sort of floating debt of about 4 or £.500,000 more ready to be added, as occasion should require.

In short, when you pressed this sensitive plant, it always contracted its dimensions. When the rude hand of inquiry was withdrawn, it expanded in all the luxuriant vigour of its original vegetation. In the treaty of 1781, the whole of the nabob's debt to private Europeans is by Mr. Sullivan, agent to the nabob and his creditors, stated at £.2,800,000, which (if the cavalry loan, and the remains of the debt of 1767, be subtracted) leaves it nearly at the amount originally declared at the Durbar, in 1777. But then there is a private instruction to Mr. Sullivan, which it seems will reduce it again to the lower standard of £.1,400,000. Failing in all my attempts by a direct account, to ascertain the extent of the capital claimed, (where in all probability no capital was ever advanced,) I endeavoured, if possible, to discover it by the interest which was to be paid. For that purpose, I looked to the several agreements for assigning the territories of the Carnatic to secure the principal and interest of this debt. In one of them* I found in a sort of postscript, by way of an additional remark, (not in the body of the obligation,) the debt represented at £.1,400,000. But when I computed the sums to be paid for interest by instalments in another paper, I found they produced an interest of two millions, at twelve *per cent.* and the assignments supposed, that if these instalments might exceed, they might also fall short of the real provision for that interest.†

Another instalment bond was afterwards granted. In that bond the interest exactly tallies with a capital of £.1,400,000.‡ But pursuing this capital through the correspondence, I lost sight of it again, and it was asserted that this instalment bond was considerably short of the interest that ought to be computed to the time mentioned.§ Here are, therefore, two statements of equal authority, differing at least a million from each other; and as neither persons claiming, nor any special sum as belonging to each particular claimant, is ascertained in the instruments of consolidation, or in the instalment bonds, a large scope was left to throw in any sums for any persons, as their merits in advancing the interest of that loan might require; a power was also left for reduction, in case a harder hand, or more scanty funds, might be found to require it. Stronger grounds for a presumption of fraud never appeared in any transaction. But the ministers, faithful to the plan of the interested persons, whom alone they thought fit to confer with on this occasion, have ordered the payment of the whole mass of these unknown unliquidated sums, without an attempt to ascertain them. On this conduct, Sir, I leave you to make your own reflections.

It is impossible (at least I have found it impossible) to fix on the real amount of the pretended debts with which your ministers have thought proper to load the Carnatic. They are obscure; they shun inquiry; they are enormous. That is all you know of them.

That you may judge what chance any honourable and useful end of government has for a provision that comes in for the leavings of these gluttonous demands, I must take it on myself to bring before you the real condition of that abused, insulted, racked, and ruined country; though in truth my mind revolts from it; though you will hear it with horrour; and I confess I tremble when I think on these awful and confounding dispensations of Providence. I shall first trouble you with a few words as to the cause.

The great fortunes made in India in the beginnings of conquest, naturally excited an emulation in all the parts, and through the whole succession of the company's service. But in the company it gave rise to other sentiments. They did not find the new channels of acquisition flow with equal riches to them. On the contrary, the high flood-tide of private emolument was generally in the lowest ebb of their affairs. They began also to fear, that the fortune of war might take away what the fortune of war had given. Wars were accordingly discouraged by repeated injunctions and menaces; and that the servants might not be bribed into them by the native princes, they were strictly forbidden to take any money whatsoever from their hands. But vehement passion is ingenious in resources. The company's servants were not only stimulated, but better instructed by the prohibition. They soon fell upon a contrivance which answered their purposes far better than the methods which were forbidden; though in this also they violated an ancient, but they thought, an abrogated order. They reversed their pro-

* Nabob's proposals to his new consolidated creditors, November 25th, 1778.

† Paper signed by the nabob, 6th January, 1780.

‡ Kistbundi to July 31, 1780.

§ Governour's letter to the nabob, 25th July, 1779.

ceedings. Instead of receiving presents, they made loans. Instead of carrying on wars in their own name, they contrived an authority, at once irresistible and irresponsible, in whose name they might ravage at pleasure; and being thus freed from all restraint, they indulged themselves in the most extravagant speculations of plunder. The cabal of creditors who have been the object of the late bountiful grant from his majesty's ministers, in order to possess themselves, under the name of creditors and assignees, of every country in India, as fast as it should be conquered, inspired into the mind of the nabob of Arcot (then a dependant on the company of the humblest order) a scheme of the most wild and desperate ambition that I believe ever was admitted into the thoughts of a man so situated.* First, they persuaded him to consider himself as a principal member in the political system of Europe. In the next place, they held out to him, and he readily imbibed, the idea of the general empire of Hindostan. As a preliminary to this undertaking, they prevailed on him to propose a tripartite division of that vast country. One part to the company; another to the Marattas; and the third to himself. To himself he reserved all the southern part of the great peninsula, comprehended under the general name of the Decan.

On this scheme of their servants, the company was to appear in the Carnatic in no other light than as a contractor for the provision of armies, and the hire of mercenaries for his use, and under his direction. This disposition was to be secured by the nabob's putting himself under the guarantee of France; and by the means of that rival nation, preventing the English for ever from assuming an equality, much less a superiority in the Carnatic. In pursuance of this treasonable project (treasonable on the part of the English) they extinguished the company as a sovereign power in that part of India; they withdrew the company's garrisons out of all the forts and strong holds of the Carnatic; they declined to receive the ambassadors from foreign courts, and remitted them to the nabob of Arcot; they fell upon, and totally destroyed the oldest ally of the company, the king of Tanjore, and plundered the country to the amount of near five millions sterling; one after another, in the nabob's name, but with English force, they brought into a miserable servitude all the princes, and great independent nobility of a vast country.* In proportion to these treasons and violences, which ruined the people, the fund of the nabob's debt grew and flourished.

Among the victims to this magnificent plan of universal plunder, worthy of the heroic avarice of the projectors, you have all heard (and he has made himself to be well remembered) of an Indian chief called Hyder Ali Khan. This man possessed the western, as the company under the name of the nabob of Arcot does the eastern, division of the Carnatic. It was among the leading measures in the design of this cabal (according to their own emphatic language) to *extirpate* this Hyder Ali.† They declared the nabob of Arcot to be his sovereign, and himself to be a rebel, and publicly invested their instrument with the sovereignty of the kingdom of Mysore. But their victim was not of the passive kind. They were soon obliged to conclude a treaty of peace and close alliance with this rebel, at the gates of Madras. Both before and since this treaty, every principle of policy pointed out this power as a natural alliance; and on his part, it was courted by every sort of amicable office. But the cabinet council of English creditors would not suffer their nabob of Arcot to sign the treaty, nor even to give to a prince, at least his equal, the ordinary titles of respect and courtesy.‡ From that time forward, a continued plot was carried on within the divan, black and white, of the nabob of Arcot, for the destruction of Hyder Ali. As to the outward members of the double, or rather treble government of Madras, which had signed the treaty, they were always prevented by some over-ruling influence (which they do not describe, but which cannot be misunderstood) from per-

* Report of the select committee, Madras Consultations, January 7, 1771. See also papers published by order of the court of directors in 1776; and Lord Macartney's correspondence with Mr. Hastings and the nabob of Arcot. See also Mr. Dundas's Appendix, No. 376 B. Nabob's propositions through Mr. Sullivan and Assam Khan, Art. 6, and indeed the whole.

* "The principal object of the expedition is to get money from Tanjore to pay the nabob's debt: if a surplus, to be applied in discharge of the nabob's debts to his private creditors." Consultations, March 20, 1771: and for further lights, Consultations, 12th June, 1771. "We are alarmed lest this debt to *individuals* should have been the *real* motive for the aggrandizement of Mahomed Ali [the nabob of Arcot] and that *we are plunged into a war* to put him in possession of the Mysore revenues *for the discharge of the debt.*" Letter from the directors, March 17, 1769.

† Letter from the nabob, May 1st, 1768; and ditto, 24th April, 1770, 1st October; ditto, 16th September, 1772, 16th March, 1773.

‡ Letter from the presidency at Madras to the court of directors, 27th June, 1769.

forming what justice and interest combined so evidently to enforce.*

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either would sign no convention, or whom no treaty, and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those, against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together, was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic—Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrours of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amid the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity, in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

The alms of the settlement, in this dreadful exigency, were certainly liberal; and all was done by charity that private charity could do: but it was a people in beggary; it was a nation which stretched out its hands for food. For months together, these creatures of sufferance, whose very excess and luxury in their most plenteous days, had fallen short of the allowance of our austerest fasts, silent, patient, resigned, without sedition or disturbance, almost without complaint, perished by an hundred a day in the streets of Madras; every day seventy at least laid their bodies in the streets, or on the glacis of Tanjore, and expired of famine in the granary of India. I was going to awake your justice towards this unhappy part of our fellow citizens, by bringing before you some of the circumstances of this plague of hunger. Of all the calamities which beset and waylay the life of man, this comes the nearest to our heart, and is that wherein the proudest of us all feels himself to be nothing more than he is: but I find myself unable to manage it with decorum; these details are of a species of horrour so nauseous and disgusting; they are so degrading to the sufferers and to the hearers; they are so humiliating to human nature itself, that, on better thoughts, I find it more adviseable to throw a pall over this hideous object, and to leave it to your general conceptions.

For eighteen months, without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali, and his more ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead uniform silence reigned over the whole region. With the inconsiderable exception of the narrow vicinage of some few forts, I wish to be understood as speaking literally;—I mean to produce to you more than three witnesses, above all exception, who will support this assertion in its full extent. That hurricane of war passed through every part of the central provinces of the Carnatic. Six or seven districts to the north and to the south (and these not wholly untouched) escaped the general ravage.*

The Carnatic is a country not much inferiour in extent to England. Figure to yourself, Mr. Speaker, the land in whose representative chair you sit; figure to yourself the form and fashion of your sweet and cheerful

* Mr. Dundas's committee, Report 1. Appendix, No. 29.

* Appendix, No. 4, Report of the Committee of assigned Revenue.

country from Thames to Trent, north and south, and from the Irish to the German sea, east and west, emptied and embowelled (may God avert the omen of our crimes!) by so accomplished a desolation. Extend your imagination a little further, and then suppose your ministers taking a survey of this scene of waste and desolation; what would be your thoughts if you should be informed, that they were computing how much had been the amount of the excises, how much the customs, how much the land and malt tax, in order that they should charge (take it in the most favourable light) for public service, upon the relics of the satiated vengeance of relentless enemies, the whole of what England had yielded in the most exuberant seasons of peace and abundance? What would you call it? To call it tyranny, sublimed into madness, would be too faint an image; yet this very madness is the principle upon which the ministers at your right hand have proceeded in their estimate of the revenues of the Carnatic, when they were providing not supply for the establishments of its protection, but rewards for the authors of its ruin.

Every day your are fatigued and disgusted with this cant, "the Carnatic is a country that will soon recover, and become instantly as prosperous as ever." They think they are talking to innocents, who will believe that by sowing of dragons' teeth, men may come up ready grown and ready armed. They who will give themselves the trouble of considering (for it requires no great reach of thought, no very profound knowledge) the manner in which mankind are increased, and countries cultivated, will regard all this raving as it ought to be regarded. In order that the people, after a long period of vexation and plunder, may be in a condition to maintain government, government must begin by maintaining them.—Here the road to œconomy lies not through receipt, but through expense; and in that country nature has given no short cut to your object. Men must propagate, like other animals, by the mouth. Never did oppression light the nuptial torch; never did extortion and usury spread out the genial bed. Does any one of you think that England, so wasted, would, under such a nursing attendance, so rapidly and cheaply recover? But he is meanly acquainted with either England or India, who does not know that England would a thousand times sooner resume population, fertility, and what ought to be the ultimate secretion from both, revenue, than such a country as the Carnatic.

The Carnatic is not by the bounty of nature a fertile soil. The general size of its cattle is proof enough that it is much otherwise. It is some days since I moved, that a curious and interesting map, kept in the India House, should be laid before you.* The India House is not yet in readiness to send it; I have therefore brought down my own copy, and there it lies for the use of any gentleman who may think such a matter worthy of his attention. It is indeed a noble map, and of noble things; but it is decisive against the golden dreams and sanguine speculations of avarice run mad. In addition to what you know must be the case in every part of the world (the necessity of a previous provision of habitation, seed, stock, capital) that map will shew you, that the uses of the influence of Heaven itself, are in that country a work of art. The Carnatic is refreshed by few or no living brooks or running streams, and it has rain only at a season; but its product of rice exacts the use of water subject to perpetual command. This is the national bank of the Carnatic, on which it must have a perpetual credit, or it perishes irretrievably. For that reason, in the happier times of India, a number, almost incredible, of reservoirs have been made in chosen places throughout the whole country; they are formed for the greater part of mounds of earth and stones, with sluices of solid masonry; the whole constructed with admirable skill and labour, and maintained at a mighty charge. In the territory contained in that map alone, I have been at the trouble of reckoning the reservoirs, and they amount to upwards of eleven hundred, from the extent of two or three acres to five miles in circuit. From these reservoirs currents are occasionally drawn over the fields, and these water-courses again call for a considerable expense to keep them properly scoured and duly levelled. Taking the district in that map as a measure, there cannot be in the Carnatic and Tanjore fewer than ten thousand of these reservoirs of the larger and middling dimensions, to say nothing of those for domestic services, and the use of religious purification. These are not the enterprises of your power, nor in a style of magnificence suited to the taste of your minister. These are the monuments of real kings, who were the fathers of their people; testators to a posterity which they embraced as their own. These are the grand sepulchres built by ambition; but by the ambition of an insatiable benevolence, which, not contented with reign-

* Mr. Barnard's map of the Jaghire

ing in the dispensation of happiness during the contracted term of human life, had strained, with all the reachings and graspings of a vivacious mind, to extend the dominion of their bounty beyond the limits of nature, and to perpetuate themselves through generations of generations, the guardians, the protectors, the nourishers of mankind.

Long before the late invasion, the persons who are objects of the grant of public money now before you, had so diverted the supply of the pious funds of culture and population, that every where the reservoirs were fallen into a miserable decay.* But after those domestic enemies had provoked the entry of a cruel foreign foe into the country, he did not leave it, until his revenge had completed the destruction begun by their avarice. Few, very few indeed, of these magazines of water that are not either totally destroyed, or cut through with such gaps, as to require a serious attention and much cost to re-establish them, as the means of present subsistence to the people, and of future revenue to the state.

What, Sir, would a virtuous and enlightened ministry do on the view of the ruins of such works before them? On the view of such a chasm of desolation as that which yawned in the midst of those countries to the north and south, which still bore some vestiges of cultivation? They would have reduced all their most necessary establishments; they would have suspended the justest payments; they would have employed every shilling derived from the producing, to reanimate the powers of the unproductive parts. While they were performing this fundamental duty, whilst they were celebrating these mysteries of justice and humanity, they would have told the corps of fictitious creditors, whose crimes were their claims, that they must keep an awful distance; that they must silence their inauspicious tongues; that they must hold off their profane unhallowed paws from this holy work; they would have proclaimed with a voice that should make itself heard, that on every country the first creditor is the plough; hat this original, indefeasible claim supersedes every other demand.

This is what a wise and virtuous ministry would have done and said. This, therefore, is what our minister could never think of saying or doing. A ministry of another kind would have first improved the country, and have thus laid a solid foundation for future opulence and future force. But on this grand point of the restoration of the country, there is not one syllable to be found in the correspondence of our ministers, from the first to the last: they felt nothing for a land desolated by fire, sword, and famine; their sympathies took another direction; they were touched with pity for bribery, so long tormented with a fruitless itching of its palms; their bowels yearned for usury, that had long missed the harvest of its returning months;* they felt for peculation which had been for so many years raking in the dust of an empty treasury; they were melted into compassion for rapine and oppression, licking their dry, parched, unbloody jaws. These were the objects of their solicitude. These were the necessities for which they were studious to provide.

To state the country and its revenues in their real condition, and to provide for those fictitious claims, consistently with the support of an army and a civil establishment, would have been impossible; therefore the ministers are silent on that head, and rest themselves on the authority of Lord Macartney, who, in a letter to the court of directors, written in the year 1781, speculating on what might be the result of a wise management of the countries assigned by the nabob of Arcot, rates the revenue as in time of peace, at twelve hundred thousand pounds a year, as he does those of the king of Tanjore (which had not been assigned) at four hundred and fifty. On this Lord Macartney grounds his calculations, and on this they choose to ground theirs. It was on this calculation that the ministry, in direct opposition to the remonstrances of the court of directors, have compelled that miserable, enslaved body, to put their hands to an order for appropriating the enormous sum of £.480,000 annually, as a fund for paying to their rebellious servants a debt contracted in defiance of their clearest and most positive injunctions.

The authority and information of Lord Macartney is held high on this occasion, though it is totally rejected in every other particular of this business. I believe I have the honour of being almost as old an acquaintance as any Lord Macartney has. A constant and unbroken friendship has subsisted between us, from a very early period; and, I trust, he thinks, that as I respect his character, and in general admire his conduct, I am one of those who feel no common interest in his reputation. Yet I do not hesitate wholly to disallow the calculation of 1781, without any apprehension that I

* See Report IV. Mr. Dundas's Committee, p. 46.

* Interest is rated in India by the month.

shall appear to distrust his veracity or his judgment. This peace estimate of revenue was not grounded on the state of the Carnatic as it then, or as it had recently, stood. It was a statement of former and better times. There is no doubt that a period did exist, when the large portion of the Carnatic held by the nabob of Arcot might be fairly reputed to produce a revenue to that, or to a greater amount. But the whole had so melted away by the slow and silent hostility of oppression and mismanagement, that the revenues, sinking with the prosperity of the country, had fallen to about £.800,000 a year, even before an enemy's horse had imprinted his hoof on the soil of the Carnatic. From that view, and independently of the decisive effects of the war which ensued, Sir Eyre Coote conceived that years must pass before the country could be restored to its former prosperity and production. It was that state of revenue, (namely, the actual state before the war,) which the directors have opposed to Lord Macartney's speculation. They refused to take the revenues for more than £.800,000. In this they are justified by Lord Macartney himself, who, in a subsequent letter, informs the court, that his sketch is a matter of speculation; it supposes the country restored to its ancient prosperity, and the revenue to be in a course of effective and honest collection. If therefore the ministers have gone wrong, they were not deceived by Lord Macartney: they were deceived by no man. The estimate of the directors is nearly the very estimate furnished by the right honourable gentleman himself, and published to the world in one of the printed reports of his own committee;* but as soon as he obtained his power, he chose to abandon his account. No part of his official conduct can be defended on the ground of his parliamentary information.

In this clashing of accounts and estimates, ought not the ministry, if they wished to preserve even appearances, to have waited for information of the actual result of these speculations, before they laid a charge, and such a charge, not conditionally and eventually, but positively and authoritatively, upon a country which they all knew, and which one of them had registered on the records of this house, to be wasted beyond all example, by every oppression of an abusive government, and every ravage of a desolating war. But that you may discern in what manner they use the correspondence of office, and that thereby you may enter into the true spirit of the ministerial board of controul, I desire you, Mr. Speaker, to remark, that through their whole controversy with the court of directors, they do not so much as hint at their ever having seen any other paper from Lord Macartney, or any other estimate of revenue, than this of 1781. To this they hold. Here they take post; here they entrench themselves.

When I first read this curious controversy between the ministerial board and the court of directors, common candour obliged me to attribute their tenacious adherence to the estimate of 1781, to a total ignorance of what had appeared upon the records. But the right honourable gentleman has chosen to come forward with an uncalled-for declaration; he boastingly tells you, that he has seen, read, digested, compared every thing; and that if he has sinned, he has sinned with his eyes broad open. Since then the ministers will obstinately shut the gates of mercy on themselves, let them add to their crimes what aggravations they please. They have then (since it must be so) wilfully and corruptly suppressed the information which they ought to have produced; and for the support of peculation, have made themselves guilty of spoliation and suppression of evidence.* The paper I hold in my hand, which totally overturns (for the present at least) the estimate of 1781, they have no more taken notice of in their controversy with the court of directors, than if it had no existence. It is the report made by a committee appointed at Madras, to manage the whole of the six countries assigned to the company by the nabob of Arcot. This committee was wisely instituted by Lord Macartney, to remove from himself the suspicion of all improper management in so invidious a trust; and it seems to have been well chosen. This committee has made a comparative estimate of the only six districts which were in a condition to be let to farm. In one set of columns they state the gross and net produce of the districts as let by the nabob. To that statement they oppose the terms on which the same districts were rented for five years, under their authority. Under the nabob, the gross farm was so high as £.570,000 sterling. What was the clear produce? Why, no more than about £.250,000; and this was the whole profit of the nabob's treasury, under his own management,

* Mr. Dundas's Committee, Rep. I. p. 9, and ditto, Rep. IV. 69, where the revenue of 1777 stated only at 23 lacs—30 lacs stated as the revenue, "*supposing* the Carnatic to be *properly* managed."

* See Appendix, No. 4, Statement in the Report of the Committee of assigned Revenue.

of all the districts which were in a condition to be let to farm on the 27th of May, 1782. Lord Macartney's leases stipulated a gross produce of no more than about £.530,000; but then the estimated net amount was nearly double the nabob's. It however did not then exceed £.480,000; and Lord Macartney's commissioners take credit for an annual revenue amounting to this clear sum. Here is no speculation; here is no inaccurate account clandestinely obtained from those who might wish, and were enabled to deceive. It is the authorized recorded state of a real recent transaction. Here is not twelve hundred thousand pound, not eight hundred. The whole revenue of the Carnatic yielded no more in May 1782 than four hundred and eighty thousand pounds; nearly the very precise sum which your minister, who is so careful of the public security, has carried from all descriptions of establishment to form a fund for the private emolument of his creatures.

In this estimate, we see, as I have just observed, the nabob's farms rated so high as £.570,000. Hitherto all is well; but follow on to the effective net revenue: there the illusion vanishes; and you will not find nearly so much as half the produce. It is with reason, therefore, Lord Macartney, invariably throughout the whole correspondence, qualifies all his views and expectations of revenue, and all his plans for its application, with this indispensable condition, that the management is not in the hands of the nabob of Arcot. Should that fatal measure take place, he has over and over again told you, that he has no prospect of releasing any thing whatsoever for any public purpose. With these weighty declarations, confirmed by such a state of indisputable fact before them; what has been done by the chancellor of the exchequer and his accomplices? Shall I be believed? They have delivered over those very territories, on the keeping of which in the hands of the committee, the defence of our dominions, and what was more dear to them, possibly, their own job depended; they have delivered back again without condition, without arrangement, without stipulation of any sort for the natives of any rank, the whole of those vast countries, to many of which he had no just claim, into the ruinous mismanagement of the nabob of Arcot. To crown all, according to their miserable practice whenever they do any thing transcendently absurd, they preface this their abdication of their trust, by a solemn declaration that they were not obliged to it by any principle of policy, or any demand of justice whatsoever.

I have stated to you the estimated produce of the territories of the Carnatic, in a condition to be farmed in 1782, according to the different managements into which they might fall; and this estimate the ministers have thought proper to suppress. Since that, two other accounts have been received. The first informs us, that there has been a recovery of what is called arrear, as well as of an improvement of the revenue of one of the six provinces which were let in 1782.* It was brought about by making a new war. After some sharp actions, by the resolution and skill of Colonel Fullarton, several of the petty princes of the most southerly of the unwasted provinces were compelled to pay very heavy rents and tributes, who for a long time before had not paid any acknowledgment. After this reduction, by the care of Mr. Irvin, one of the committee, that province was divided into twelve farms. This operation raised the income of that particular province; the others remain as they were first farmed. So that instead of producing only their original rent of £.480,000, they netted in about two years and a quarter, £.1,320,000 sterling, which would be about £.660,000 a year, if the recovered arrear was not included. What deduction is to be made on account of that arrear I cannot determine, but certainly what would reduce the annual income considerably below the rate I have allowed.

The second account received, is the letting of the wasted provinces of the Carnatic. This I understand is at a growing rent, which may or may not realise what it promises; but if it should answer, it will raise the whole, at some future time, to £.1,200,000.

You must here remark, Mr. Speaker, that this revenue is the produce of *all* the nabob's dominions. During the assignment, the nabob paid nothing, because the company had all. Supposing the whole of the lately assigned territory to yield up to the most sanguine expectations of the right honourable gentleman; and suppose £.1,200,000 to be annually realised (of which we actually know of no more than the realising of six hundred thousand) out of this you must deduct the subsidy and rent which the nabob paid before the assignment, namely £.340,000 a year. This reduces back the revenue applicable to the new distribution made by his majesty's ministers, to about £.800,000. Of that sum five eighths are by them surrendered to the debts. The remaining three are the only fund left for all the pus-

* The province of Tinnevelly.

poses so magnificently displayed in the letter of the board of controul; that is for a new-cast peace establishment; a new fund for ordnance and fortifications; and a large allowance for what they call "the splendour of the Durbar."

You have heard the account of these territories as they stood in 1782. You have seen the *actual* receipt since the assignment in 1781, of which I reckon about two years and a quarter productive. I have stated to you the expectation from the wasted part. For realising all this you may value yourselves on the vigour and diligence of a governour and committee that have done so much. If these hopes from the committee are rational—remember that the committee is no more. Your ministers, who have formed their fund for these debts on the presumed effect of the committee's management, have put a complete end to that committee. Their acts are rescinded; their leases are broken; their renters are dispersed. Your ministers knew when they signed the death-warrant of the Carnatic, that the nabob would not only turn all these unfortunate farmers of revenue out of employment, but that he has denounced his severest vengeance against them, for acting under British authority. With a knowledge of this disposition, a British chancellor of the exchequer, and treasurer of the navy, incited by no public advantage, impelled by no public necessity, in a strain of the most wanton perfidy which has ever stained the annals of mankind, have delivered over to plunder, imprisonment, exile, and death itself, according to the mercy of such execrable tyrants as Amir ul Omra and Paul Benfield, the unhappy and deluded souls, who, untaught by uniform example, were still weak enough to put their trust in English faith.* They have gone farther; they have thought proper to mock and outrage their misery by ordering them protection and compensation. From what power is this protection to be derived? And from what fund is this compensation to arise? The revenues are delivered over to their oppressor; the territorial jurisdiction, from whence that revenue is to arise, and under which they live, is surrendered to the same iron hands: and that they shall be deprived of all refuge, and all hope, the minister has made a solemn, voluntary declaration, that he never will interfere with the nabob's internal government.†

The last thing considered by the board of controul among the debts of the Carnatic, was that arising to the East India company, which after the provision for the cavalry, and the consolidation of 1777, was to divide the residue of the fund of £.480,000 a year with the lenders of 1767. This debt, the worthy chairman, who sits opposite to me, contends to be three millions sterling. Lord Macartney's account of 1781, states it to be at that period, £.1,200,000. The first account of the court of directors makes it £.900,000. This, like the private debt, being without any solid existence, is incapable of any distinct limits. Whatever its amount or its validity may be, one thing is clear; it is of the nature and quality of a public debt. In that light nothing is provided for it, but as eventual surplus to be divided with one class of the private demands, after satisfying the two first classes. Never was a more shameful postponing a public demand, which by the reason of the thing, and the uniform practice of all nations, supersedes every private claim.

Those who gave this preference to private claims, consider the company's as a lawful demand; else, why did they pretend to provide for it? On their own principles they are condemned.

But I, Sir, who profess to speak to your understanding and to your conscience, and to brush away even from this business all false colours, all false appellations, as well as false facts, do positively deny that the Carnatic owes a shilling to the company; whatever the company may be indebted to that undone country. It owes nothing to the company for this plain and simple reason—The territory charged with the debt is their own. To say that their revenues fall short, and owe them money, is to say they are in debt to themselves, which is only talking nonsense. The fact is, that by the invasion of an enemy, and the ruin of the country, the company, either in its own name, or in the names of the nabob of Arcot and rajah of Tanjore, has lost for several years what it might have looked to receive from its own estate. If men were allowed to credit themselves upon such principles, any one might soon grow rich by this mode of accounting. A flood comes down upon a man's estate in the Bedford Level of a thousand pounds a year, and drowns his rents for ten years. The chancellor would put that man into the hands of a trustee, who would gravely make up his books, and for this loss credit himself in his account for a debt due to him of £.10,000. It is, however, on this principle the company makes up its demands on the Carnatic. In peace they go the full length, and indeed more

* Appendix, No. 5.

† See extract of their letter in the Appendix, No. 9.

than the full length, of what the people can bear for current establishments; then they are absurd enough to consolidate all the calamities of war into debts; to metamorphose the devastations of the country into demands upon its future production. What is this but to avow a resolution utterly to destroy their own country, and to force the people to pay for their sufferings, to a government which has proved unable to protect either the share of the husbandman or their own? In every lease of a farm, the invasion of an enemy, instead of forming a demand for arrear, is a release of rent; nor for that release is it at all necessary to shew, that the invasion has left nothing to the occupier of the soil; though in the present case it would be too easy to prove that melancholy fact.* I therefore applauded my right honourable friend, who, when he canvassed the company's accounts, as a preliminary to a bill that ought not to stand on falsehood of any kind, fixed his discerning eye, and his deciding hand, on these debts of the company, from the nabob of Arcot and rajah of Tanjore, and at one stroke expunged them all, as utterly irrecoverable; he might have added as utterly unfounded.

On these grounds I do not blame the arrangement this day in question, as a preference given to the debt of individuals over the company's debt. In my eye it is no more than the preference of a fiction over a chimera; but I blame the preference given to those fictitious private debts over the standing defence and the standing government. It is there the public is robbed. It is robbed in its army; it is robbed in its civil administration; it is robbed in its credit; it is robbed in its investment which forms the commercial connection between that country and Europe. There is the robbery.

But my principal objection lies a good deal deeper. That debt to the company is the pretext under which all the other debts lurk and cover themselves. That debt forms the foul putrid mucus, in which are engendered the whole brood of creeping ascarides, all the endless involutions, the eternal knot, added to a knot of those inexpugnable tape-worms which devour the nutriment, and eat up the bowels of India.† It is necessary, Sir, you should recollect two things: first, that the nabob's debt to the company carries no interest. In the next place you will observe, that whenever the company has occasion to borrow, she has always commanded whatever she thought fit at eight *per cent.* Carrying in your mind these two facts, attend to the process with regard to the public and private debt, and with what little appearance of decency they play into each other's hands a game of utter perdition to the unhappy natives of India. The nabob falls into an arrear to the company. The presidency presses for payment. The nabob's answer is, I have no money. Good. But there are soucars who will supply you on the mortgage of your territories. Then steps forward some Paul Benfield, and from his grateful compassion to the nabob, and his filial regard to the company, he unlocks the treasures of his virtuous industry; and for a consideration of twenty-four or thirty-six *per cent.* on a mortgage of the territorial revenue, becomes security to the company for the nabob's arrear.

All this intermediate usury thus becomes sanctified by the ultimate view to the company's payment. In this case, would not a plain man ask this plain question of the company; if you know that the nabob must annually mortgage his territories to your servants to pay his annual arrear to you, why is not the assignment or mortgage made directly to the company itself? By this simple obvious operation, the company would be relieved and the debt paid, without the charge of a shilling interest to that prince. But if that course should be thought too indulgent, why do they not take that assignment with such interest to themselves as they pay to others, that is eight *per cent?* Or if it were thought more adviseable (why it should I know not) that he must borrow, why do not the company lend their own credit to the nabob for their own payment? That credit would not be weakened by the collateral security of his territorial mortgage. The money might still be had at eight *per cent.* Instead of any of these honest and obvious methods, the company has for years kept up a shew of disinterestedness and moderation, by suffering a debt to accumulate to them from the country powers without any interest at all; and at the same time have seen before their eyes, on a pretext of borrowing to pay that debt, the revenues of the country charged with an usury of twenty, twenty-four, thirty-six, and

* "It is certain that the incursion of a *few* of Hyder's Horse into the Jaghire, in 1767, cost the company upwards of pagodas 27,000 in *allowances for damages.*" Consultations, February 11th, 1771.

† Proceedings at Madras, 11th February, 1769, and throughout the correspondence on this subject; particularly Consultations, October 4th, 1769, and the Creditors' Memorial, 20th January, 1770.

even eight-and-forty *per cent.* with compound interest,* for the benefit of their servants. All this time they know, that by having a debt subsisting without any interest, which is to be paid by contracting a debt on the highest interest, they manifestly render it necessary to the nabob of Arcot to give the private demand a preference to the public; and by binding him and their servants together in a common cause, they enable him to form a party to the utter ruin of their own authority, and their own affairs. Thus their false moderation, and their affected purity, by the natural operation of every thing false, and every thing affected, becomes pander and bawd to the unbridled debauchery and licentious lewdness of usury and extortion.

In consequence of this double game, all the territorial revenues have, at one time or other, been covered by those locusts, the English soucars. Not one single foot of the Carnatic has escaped them; a territory as large as England. During these operations what a scene has that country presented!† The usurious European assignee supersedes the nabob's native farmer of the revenue; the farmer flies to the nabob's presence to claim his bargain; whilst his servants murmur for wages, and his soldiers mutiny for pay. The mortgage to the European assignee is then resumed, and the native farmer replaced, again to be removed on the new clamour of the European assignee.‡ Every man of rank and landed fortune being long since extinguished, the remaining miserable last cultivator, who grows to the soil, after having his back scored by the farmer, has it again flayed by the whip of the assignee, and is thus by a ravenous, because a short-lived succession of claimants, lashed from oppressor to oppressor, whilst a single drop of blood is left as the means of extorting a single grain of corn. Do not think I paint. Far, very far from it; I do not reach the fact, nor approach to it. Men of respectable condition, men equal to your substantial English yeomen, are daily tied up and scourged to answer the multiplied demands of various contending and contradictory titles, all issuing from one and the same source. Tyrannous exaction brings on servile concealment; and that again calls forth tyrannous coercion. They move in a circle, mutually producing and produced; till at length nothing of humanity is left in the government, no trace of integrity, spirit, or manliness in the people, who drag out a precarious and degraded existence under this system of outrage upon human nature. Such is the effect of the establishment of a debt to the company, as it has hitherto been managed, and as it ever will remain, until ideas are adopted totally different from those which prevail at this time.

Your worthy ministers, supporting what they are obliged to condemn, have thought fit to renew the company's old order against contracting private debts in future. They begin by rewarding the violation of the ancient law; and then they gravely re-enact provisions, of which they have given bounties for the breach. This inconsistency has been well exposed.* But what will you say to their having gone the length of giving positive directions for contracting the debt which they positively forbid?

I will explain myself. They order the nabob, out of the revenues of the Carnatic, to allot four hundred and eighty thousand pounds a year, as a fund for the debts before us. For the punctual payment of this annuity, they order him to give *soucar* security.† When a *soucar*, that is a money dealer, becomes security for any native prince, the course is, for the native prince to counter-secure the money dealer, by making over to him in mortgage a portion of his territory, equal to the sum annually to be paid, with an interest of at least twenty-four *per cent.* The point fit for the house to know is, who are these soucars, to whom this security on the revenues in favour of the nabob's creditors is to be given? The majority of the house, unaccustomed to these transactions, will hear with astonishment that these soucars are no other than the creditors themselves. The minister, not content with authorising these

* Appendix, No. 7.

† For some part of these usurious transactions, see Consultation 28th January 1781; and for the nabob's excusing his oppressions on account of these debts, Consultation 26th November 1770. "Still I undertook, first, the payment of the money belonging to the company, who are my kind friends, and by borrowing, and *mortgaging my jewels*, &c. by *taking from every one of my servants*, in proportion to their circumstances, by *fresh severities* also on my country, *notwithstanding its distressed state*, as you know." —The Board's remark is as follows; after controverting some of the facts, they say, "That his countries are oppressed is most certain, but not from real necessity; *his debts have indeed afforded him a constant pretence* for using severities and cruel oppressions."

‡ See Consultation 28th January 1781, where it is asserted, and not denied, that the nabob's farmers of revenue seldom continue for three months together. From this the state of the country may be easily judged of.

* In Mr. Fox's speech.

† The amended Letter, Appendix, No. 9.

transactions in a manner and to an extent unhoped for by the rapacious expectations of usury itself, loads the broken back of the Indian revenues, in favour of his worthy friends the soucars, with an additional twenty-four *per cent.* for being security to themselves for their own claims; for condescending to take the country in mortgage, to pay to themselves the fruits of their own extortions.

The interest to be paid for this security, according to the most moderate strain of soucar demand, comes to one hundred and eighteen thousand pounds a year, which added to the £480,000 on which it is to accrue, will make the whole charge on account of these debts on the Carnatic revenues amount to £598,000 a year, as much as even a long peace will enable those revenues to produce. Can any one reflect for a moment on all those claims of debt, which the minister exhausts himself in contrivances to augment with new usuries, without lifting up his hands and eyes in astonishment of the impudence, both of the claim and of the adjudication? Services of some kind or other these servants of the company must have done, so great and eminent, that the chancellor of the exchequer cannot think that all they have brought home is half enough. He halloos after them, "Gentlemen, you have forgot a large packet behind you, in your hurry; you have not sufficiently recovered yourselves; you ought to have, and you shall have, interest upon interest, upon a prohibited debt that is made up of interest upon interest. Even this is too little. I have thought of another character for you, by which you may add something to your gains; you shall be security to yourselves; and hence will arise a new usury, which shall efface the memory of all the usuries suggested to you by your own dull inventions."

I have done with the arrangement relative to the Carnatic. After this it is to little purpose to observe on what the ministers have done to Tanjore. Your ministers have not observed even form and ceremony in their outrageous and insulting robbery of that country, whose only crime has been, its early and constant adherence to the power of this, and the suffering of an uniform pillage in consequence of it. The debt of the company from the rajah of Tanjore, is just of the same stuff with that of the nabob of Arcot.

The subsidy from Tanjore, on the arrear of which this pretended debt (if any there be) has accrued to the company, is not, like that paid by the nabob of Arcot, a compensation for vast countries obtained, augmented, and preserved for him; not the price of pillaged treasuries, ransacked houses, and plundered territories.—It is a large grant, from a small kingdom not obtained by our arms; robbed, not protected, by our power; a grant for which no equivalent was ever given, or pretended to be given. The right honourable gentleman, however, bears witness in his reports to the punctuality of the payments of this grant of bounty, or, if you please, of fear. It amounts to one hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling net annual subsidy. He bears witness to a further grant of a town and port, with an annexed district of thirty thousand pounds a year, surrendered to the company since the first donation. He has not borne witness, but the fact is, (he will not deny it,) that in the midst of war, and during the ruin and desolation of a considerable part of his territories, this prince made many very large payments. Notwithstanding these merits and services, the first regulation of ministry is to force from him a territory of an extent which they have not yet thought proper to ascertain,* for a military peace establishment, the particulars of which they have not yet been pleased to settle.

The next part of their arrangement is with regard to war. As confessedly this prince had no share in stirring up any of the former wars, so all future wars are completely out of his power; for he has no troops whatever, and is under a stipulation not so much as to correspond with any foreign state, except through the company. Yet, in case the company's servants should be again involved in war, or should think proper again to provoke any enemy, as in times past they have wantonly provoked all India, he is to be subjected to a new penalty. To what penalty?—Why, to no less than the confiscation of all his revenues. But this is to end with the war, and they are to be faithfully returned?—Oh! no; nothing like it. The country is to remain under confiscation until all the debt which the company shall think fit to incur in such war shall be discharged; that is to say, for ever. His sole comfort is to find his old enemy, the nabob of Arcot, placed in the very same condition.

The revenues of that miserable country were, before the invasion of Hyder, reduced to a *gross* annual receipt of three hundred and sixty thousand pound.† From this receipt the sub-

* Appendix, No 8.

† Mr Petrie's evidence before the select committee, App. No. 7.

sidy I have just stated is taken. This again, by payments in advance, by extorting deposits of additional sums to a vast amount for the benefit of the soucars, and by an endless variety of other extortions, public and private, is loaded with a debt, the amount of which I never could ascertain, but which is large undoubtedly, generating an usury the most completely ruinous that probably was ever heard of; *that is, forty-eight per cent. payable monthly with compound interest.**

Such is the state to which the company's servants have reduced that country. Now come the reformers, restorers, and comforters of India. What have they done? In addition to all these tyrannous exactions with all these ruinous debts in their train, looking to one side of an agreement whilst they wilfully shut their eyes to the other, they withdraw from Tanjore all the benefits of the treaty of 1762, and they subject that nation to a perpetual tribute of forty thousand a year to the nabob of Arcot; a tribute never due, or pretended to be due to *him*, even when he appeared to be something; a tribute, as things now stand, not to a real potentate, but to a shadow, a dream, an incubus of oppression. After the company has accepted in subsidy, in grant of territory, in remission of rent, as a compensation for their own protection, at least two hundred thousand pounds a year, without discounting a shilling for that receipt, the ministers condemn this harassed nation to be tributary to a person who is himself, by their own arrangement, deprived of the right of war or peace; deprived of the power of the sword; forbid to keep up a single regiment of soldiers; and is therefore wholly disabled from all protection of the country which is the object of the pretended tribute. Tribute hangs on the sword. It is an incident inseparable from real sovereign power. In the present case to suppose its existence, is as absurd as it is cruel and oppressive. And here, Mr. Speaker, you have a clear exemplification of the use of those false names, and false colours, which the gentlemen who have lately taken possession of India choose to lay on for the purpose of disguising their plan of oppression. The nabob of Arcot, and rajah of Tanjore, have, in truth and substance, no more than a merely civil authority, held in the most entire dependence on the company. The nabob, without military, without federal capacity, is extinguished as a potentate; but then he is carefully kept alive as an independent and sovereign power, for the purpose of rapine and extortion; for the purpose of perpetuating the old intrigues, animosities, usuries, and corruptions.

It was not enough that this mockery of tribute was to be continued without the correspondent protection, or any of the stipulated equivalents, but ten years of arrear, to the amount of £.400,000 sterling, is added to all the debts to the company, and to individuals, in order to create a new debt, to be paid, (if at all possible to be paid in whole or in part) only by new usuries; and all this for the nabob of Arcot, or rather for Mr. Benfield, and the corps of the nabob's creditors and their soucars. Thus these miserable Indian princes are continued in their seats, for no other purpose than to render them in the first instance objects of every species of extortion; and in the second, to force them to become, for the sake of a momentary shadow of reduced authority, a sort of subordinate tyrants, the ruin and calamity, not the fathers and cherishers of their people.

But take this tribute only as a mere charge (without title, cause, or equivalent) on this people; what one step has been taken to furnish grounds for a just calculation and estimate of the proportion of the burthen and the ability? None; not an attempt at it. They do not adapt the burthen to the strength; but they estimate the strength of the bearers by the burthen they impose. Then what care is taken to leave a fund sufficient to the future reproduction of the revenues that are to bear all these loads? Every one, but tolerably conversant in Indian affairs, must know that the existence of this little kingdom depends on its controul over the river Cavery. The benefits of heaven to any community, ought never to be connected with political arrangements, or made to depend on the personal conduct of princes; in which the mistake, or errour, or neglect, or distress, or passion of a moment on either side, may bring famine on millions, and ruin an innocent nation perhaps for ages. The means of the subsistence of mankind should be as immutable as the laws of nature, let power and dominion take what course they may.—Observe what has been done with regard to this important concern. The use of this river is indeed at length given to the rajah, and a power provided for its enjoyment *at his own charge;* but the means of furnishing that charge (and a mighty one it is) are wholly cut off. This use of the water, which ought to have no more connection than clouds and rains, and sunshine, with the politics of the rajah, the nabob, or the company, is expressly contrived as a means of enforcing demands and

* Appendix, No. 7.

arrears of tribute. This horrid and unnatural instrument of extortion had been a distinguishing feature in the enormities of the Carnatic politics that loudly called for reformation. But the food of a whole people is by the reformers of India conditioned on payments from its prince, at a moment that he is overpowered with a swarm of their demands, without regard to the ability of either prince or people. In fine, by opening an avenue to the irruption of the nabob of Arcot's creditors and soucars, whom every man who did not fall in love with oppression and corruption on an experience of the calamities they produced, would have raised wall before wall, and mound before mound, to keep from a possibility of entrance, a more destructive enemy than Hyder Ali is introduced into that kingdom. By this part of their arrangement in which they establish a debt to the nabob of Arcot, in effect and substance, they deliver over Tanjore, bound hand and foot, to Paul Benfield, the old betrayer, insulter, oppressor, and scourge of a country, which has for years been an object of an unremitted, but unhappily an unequal struggle, between the bounties of Providence to renovate, and the wickedness of mankind to detroy.

The right honourable gentleman* talks of his fairness in determining the territorial dispute between the nabob of Arcot and the prince of that country, when he superseded the determination of the directors, in whom the law had vested the decision of that controversy. He is in this just as feeble as he is in every other part. But it is not necessary to say a word in refutation of any part of his argument. The mode of the proceeding sufficiently speaks the spirit of it. It is enough to fix his character as a judge that he *never heard the directors in defence of their adjudication, nor either of the parties in support of their respective claims.* It is sufficient for me, that he takes from the rajah of Tanjore by this pretended adjudication, or rather from his unhappy subjects, £.40,000 a year of his and their revenue, and leaves upon his and their shoulders all the charges that can be made on the part of the nabob, on the part of his creditors, and on the part of the company, without so much as hearing him as to right or to ability. But what principally induces me to leave the affair of the territorial dispute between the nabob and the rajah to another day, is this, that both the parties being stripped of their all, it little signifies under which of their names the unhappy undone people are delivered over to the merciless soucars, the allies of that right honourable gentleman, and the chancellor of the exchequer. In them ends the account of this long dispute of the nabob of Arcot, and the rajah of Tanjore.

The right honourable gentleman is of opinion, that his judgment in this case can be censured by none, but those who seem to act as if they were paid agents to one of the parties. What does he think of his court of directors? If they are paid by either of the parties, by which of them does he think they are paid? He knows that their decision has been directly contrary to his. Shall I believe that it does not enter into his heart to conceive, that any person can steadily and actively interest himself in the protection of the injured and oppressed, without being well paid for his service? I have taken notice of this sort of discourse some days ago, so far as it may be supposed to relate to me. I then contented myself, as I shall now do, with giving it a cold, though a very direct contradiction. Thus much I do from respect to truth. If I did more, it might be supposed, by my anxiety to clear myself, that I had imbibed the ideas, which, for obvious reasons, the right honourable gentleman wishes to have received concerning all attempts to plead the cause of the natives of India, as if it were a disreputable employment. If he had not forgot in his present occupation, every principle which ought to have guided him, and I hope did guide him, in his late profession, he would have known, that he who takes a fee for pleading the cause of distress against power, and manfully performs the duty he has assumed, receives an honourable recompense for a virtuous service. But if the right honourable gentleman will have no regard to fact in his insinuations, or to reason in his opinions, I wish him at least to consider, that if taking an earnest part with regard to the oppressions exercised in India, and with regard to this most oppressive case of Tanjore in particular, can ground a presumption of interested motives, he is himself the most mercenary man I know. His conduct indeed is such that he is on all occasions the standing testimony against himself. He it was that first called to that case the attention of the house: the reports of his own committee are ample and affecting upon that subject;* and as many of us as have escaped his massacre, must remember the very pathetic picture he made of the sufferings of the Tanjore

* Mr. Dundas.

* See Report IV. Committee of Secrecy, p 73, and 74; and Appendix in sundry places.

country, on the day when he moved the unwieldy code of his Indian resolutions. Has he not stated over and over again in his reports, the ill treatment of the rajah of Tanjore, (a branch of the royal house of the Marattas, every injury to whom the Marattas felt as offered to themselves,) as a main cause of the alienation of that people from the British power? And does he now think, that to betray his principles, to contradict his declarations, and to become himself an active instrument in those oppressions which he had so tragically lamented, is the way to clear himself of having been actuated by a pecuniary interest, at the time when he chose to appear full of tenderness to that ruined nation?

The right honourable gentleman is fond of parading on the motives of others, and on his own. As to himself, he despises the imputations of those who suppose that any thing corrupt could influence him in this his unexampled liberality of the public treasure. I do not know that I am obliged to speak to the motives of ministry, in the arrangements they have made of the pretended debts of Arcot and Tanjore. If I prove fraud and collusion with regard to public money on those right honourable gentlemen, I am not obliged to assign their motives; because no good motives can be pleaded in favour of their conduct. Upon that case I stand; we are at issue; and I desire to go to trial. This, I am sure, is not loose railing, or mean insinuation, according to their low and degenerate fashion, when they make attacks on the measures of their adversaries. It is a regular and juridical course; and, unless I choose it, nothing can compel me to go further.

But since these unhappy gentlemen have dared to hold a lofty tone about their motives, and affect to despise suspicion, instead of being careful not to give cause for it, I shall beg leave to lay before you some general observations on what, I conceive, was their duty in so delicate a business.

If I were worthy to suggest any line of prudence to that right honourable gentleman, I would tell him, that the way to avoid suspicion in the settlement of pecuniary transactions, in which great frauds have been very strongly presumed, is, to attend to these few plain principles:—First, to hear all parties equally, and not the managers for the suspected claimants only.—Not to proceed in the dark; but to act with as much publicity as possible. —Not to precipitate decision—To be religious in following the rules prescribed in the commission under which we act. And, lastly, and above all, not to be fond of straining constructions, to force a jurisdiction, and to draw to ourselves the management of a trust in its nature invidious and obnoxious to suspicion, where the plainest letter of the law does not compel it. If these few plain rules are observed, no corruption ought to be suspected; if any of them are violated, suspicion will attach in proportion. If all of them are violated, a corrupt motive of some kind or other will not only be suspected, but must be violently presumed.

The persons in whose favour all these rules have been violated, and the conduct of ministers towards them, will naturally call for your consideration, and will serve to lead you through a series and combination of facts and characters, if I do not mistake, into the very inmost recesses of this mysterious business. You will then be in possession of all the materials on which the principles of sound jurisprudence will found, or will reject the presumption of corrupt motives; or if such motives are indicated, will point out to you of what particular nature the corruption is.

Our wonderful minister, as you all know, formed a new plan, a plan *insigne recens indictum ore alio*, a plan for supporting the freedom of our constitution by court intrigues, and for removing its corruptions by Indian delinquency. To carry that bold paradoxical design into execution, sufficient funds and apt instruments became necessary. You are perfectly sensible that a parliamentary reform occupies his thoughts day and night, as an essential member in this extraordinary project. In his anxious researches upon this subject, natural instinct, as well as sound policy, would direct his eyes, and settle his choice on Paul Benfield. Paul Benfield is the grand parliamentary reformer, the reformer to whom the whole choir of reformers bow, and to whom even the right honourable gentleman himself must yield the palm: For what region in the empire, what city, what borough, what county, what tribunal, in this kingdom, is not full of his labours? Others have been only speculators, he is the grand practical reformer; and whilst the chancellor of the exchequer pledges in vain the man and the minister, to increase the provincial members, Mr. Benfield has auspiciously and practically begun it. Leaving far behind him even Lord Camelford's generous design of bestowing Old Sarum on the bank of England, Mr. Benfield has thrown in the borough of Cricklade to reinforce the county representation. Not content with this, in order to station a steady phalanx for all future reforms, this

public spirited usurer, amid his charitable toils for the relief of India, did not forget the poor rotten constitution of his native country. For her, he did not disdain to stoop to the trade of a wholesale upholsterer for this house, to furnish it, not with the faded tapestry figures of antiquated merit, such as decorate, and may reproach some other houses, but with real, solid, living patterns of true modern virtue. Paul Benfield made (reckoning himself) no fewer than eight members in the last parliament. What copious streams of pure blood must he not have transfused into the veins of the present!

But what is even more striking than the real services of this new-imported patriot, is his modesty. As soon as he had conferred this benefit on the constitution, he withdrew himself from our applause. He conceived that the duties of a member of parliament (which with the elect faithful, the true believers, the *Islam* of parliamentary reform, are of little or no merit, perhaps not much better than specious sins) might be as well attended to in India as in England, and the means of reformation to parliament itself, be far better provided. Mr. Benfield was therefore no sooner elected, than he set off for Madras, and defrauded the longing eyes of parliament. We have never enjoyed in this house the luxury of beholding that minion of the human race, and contemplating that visage, which has so long reflected the happiness of nations.

It was therefore not possible for the minister to consult personally with this great man. What then was he to do? Through a sagacity that never failed him in these pursuits, he found out in Mr. Benfield's representative, his exact resemblance. A specific attraction by which he gravitates towards all such characters, soon brought our minister into a close connection with Mr. Benfield's agent and attorney; that is, with the grand contractor (whom I name to honour) Mr. Richard Atkinson; a name that will be well remembered as long as the records of this house, as long as the records of the British treasury, as long as the monumental debt of England shall endure.

This gentleman, Sir, acts as attorney for Mr. Paul Benfield. Every one who hears me, is well acquainted with the sacred friendship, and the steady mutual attachment that subsists between him and the present minister. As many members as chose to attend in the first session of this parliament, can best tell their own feelings at the scenes which were then acted. How much that honourable gentleman was consulted in the original frame and fabric of the bill, commonly called Mr. Pitt's India bill, is matter only of conjecture; though by no means difficult to divine. But the public was an indignant witness of the ostentation with which the measure was made his own, and the authority with which he brought up clause after clause, to stuff and fatten the rankness of that corrupt act. As fast as the clauses were brought up to the table they were accepted. No hesitation; no discussion. They were received by the new minister, not with approbation, but with implicit submission. The reformation may be estimated by seeing who was the reformer. Paul Benfield's associate and agent was held up to the world as legislator of Hindostan. But it was necessary to authenticate the coalition between the men of intrigue in India, and the minister of intrigue in England, by a studied display of the power of this their connecting link. Every trust, every honour, every distinction, was to be heaped upon him. He was at once made a director of the India company; made an alderman of London; and to be made, if ministry could prevail, (and I am sorry to say how near, how very near they were prevailing,) representative of the capital of this kingdom. But to secure his services against all risk, he was brought in for a ministerial borough. On his part, he was not wanting in zeal for the common cause. His advertisements shew his motives, and the merits upon which he stood. For your minister, this worn-out veteran submitted to enter into the dusty field of the London contest; and you all remember, that in the same virtuous cause he submitted to keep a sort of public office or counting-house, where the whole business of the last general election was managed. It was openly managed by the direct agent and attorney of Benfield. It was managed upon India principles, and for an Indian interest. This was the golden cup of abominations; this the chalice of the fornications of rapine, usury, and oppression, which was held out by the gorgeous eastern harlot; which so many of the people, so many of the nobles of this land had drained to the very dregs. Do you think that no reckoning was to follow this lewd debauch? that no payment was to be demanded for this riot of public drunkenness and naitonal prostitution? Here! you have it here before you. The principal of the grand election manager must be indemnified; accordingly the claims of Benfield and his crew must be put above all inquiry.

For several years, Benfield appeared as the chief proprietor, as well as the chief agent, director, and controuler, of this system of debt.

The worthy chairman of the company has stated the claims of this single gentleman on the nabob of Arcot, as amounting to five hundred thousand pound.* Possibly at the time of the chairman's state they might have been as high. Eight hundred thousand pound had been mentioned some time before;† and according to the practice of shifting the names of creditors in these transactions, and reducing or raising the debt itself at pleasure, I think it not impossible, that at one period, the name of Benfield might have stood before those frightful figures. But my best information goes to fix his share no higher than four hundred thousand pounds. By the scheme of the present ministry for adding to the principal twelve *per cent.* from the year 1777 to the year 1781, four hundred thousand pounds, that smallest of the sums ever mentioned for Mr. Benfield, will form a capital of £.592,000 at six *per cent.* Thus, besides the arrears of three years, amounting to £.106,500 (which, as fast as received, may be legally lent out at twelve *per cent.*) Benfield has received by the ministerial grant before, an annuity of £.35,520 a year, charged on the public revenues.

Our mirror of ministers of finance, did not think this enough for the services of such a friend as Benfield. He found that Lord Macartney, in order to frighten the court of directors from the project of obliging the nabob to give soucar security for his debt, assured them, that if they should take that step, Benfield ‡ would infallibly be the soucar; and would thereby become the entire master of the Carnatic. What Lord Macartney thought sufficient to deter the very agents and partakers with Benfield in his iniquities, was the inducement to the two right honourable gentlemen to order this very soucar security to be given, and to recall Benfield to the city of Madras, from the sort of decent exile, into which he had been relegated by Lord Macartney. You must therefore consider Benfield, as soucar security for £.480,000 a year, which at twenty-four *per cent.* (supposing him contented with that profit) will, with the interest of his old debt, produce an annual income of £.149,520 a year.

Here is a specimen of the new and pure aristocracy created by the right honourable gentleman,§ as the support of the crown and constitution, against the old, corrupt, refractory, natural interests of this kingdom; and this is the grand counterpoise against all odious coalitions of these interests. A single Benfield outweighs them all; a criminal, who long since ought to have fattened the region kites with his offal, is, by his majesty's ministers, enthroned in the government of a great kingdom, and enfeoffed with an estate, which in the comparison effaces the splendour of all the nobility of Europe. To bring a little more distinctly into view the true secret of this dark transaction, I beg you particularly to advert to the circumstances which I am going to place before you.

The general corps of creditors, as well as Mr. Benfield himself, not looking well into futurity, nor presaging the minister of this day, thought it not expedient for their common interest, that such a name as his should stand at the head of their list. It was therefore agreed among them, that Mr. Benfield should disappear by making over his debt to Messrs. Taylor, Majendie, and Call, and should in return be secured by their bond.

The debt thus exonerated of so great a weight of its odium, and otherwise reduced from its alarming bulk, the agents thought they might venture to print a list of the creditors. This was done for the first time in the year 1783, during the duke of Portland's administration. In this list the name of Benfield was not to be seen. To this strong negative testimony was added the further testimony of the nabob of Arcot. That prince* (or rather Mr. Benfield for him) writes to the court of directors a letter† full of complaints and accusations against Lord Macartney, conveyed in such terms as were natural for one of Mr. Benfield's habits and education to employ. Among the rest he is made to complain of his lordship's endeavouring to prevent an intercourse of politeness and sentiment between him and Mr. Benfield; and to aggravate the affront, he expressly declares Mr. Benfield's visits to be only on account of respect and of gratitude, as no pecuniary transaction subsisted between them.

Such, for a considerable space of time, was the outward form of the loan of 1777, in which Mr. Benfield had no sort of concern. At length intelligence arrived at Madras, that

* Mr. Smith's protest.
† Madras correspondence on this subject.
‡ Appendix, No. 6.
§ Right honourable William Pitt.

* Appendix, No. 10.
† Dated 13th October. For further illustration of the style in which these letters were written, and the principles on which they proceed, see letters from the nabob to the court of directors, dated August 16th, and September 7th 1783, delivered by Mr. James Macpherson, minister to the nabob, January 14th, 1784. Appendix, No. 10.

this debt, which had always been renounced by the court of directors, was rather like to become the subject of something more like a criminal inquiry, than of any patronage or sanction from parliament. Every ship brought accounts, one stronger than the other, of the prevalence of the determined enemies of the Indian system. The public revenues became an object desperate to the hopes of Mr. Benfield; he therefore resolved to fall upon his associates, and, in violation of that faith which subsists among those who have abandoned all other, commences a suit in the mayor's court against Taylor, Majendie, and Call, for the bond given to him, when he agreed to disappear for his own benefit as well as that of the common concern. The assignees of his debt, who little expected the springing of this mine, even from such an engineer as Mr. Benfield, after recovering their first alarm, thought it best to take ground on the real state of the transaction. They divulged the whole mystery, and were prepared to plead that they had never received from Mr. Benfield any other consideration for the bond, than a transfer, in trust for himself, of his demand on the nabob of Arcot. An universal indignation arose against the perfidy of Mr. Benfield's proceeding: the event of the suit was looked upon as so certain, that Benfield was compelled to retreat as precipitately as he had advanced boldly; he gave up his bond, and was reinstated in his original demand, to wait the fortune of other claimants. At that time, and at Madras, this hope was dull indeed; but at home another scene was preparing.

It was long before any public account of this discovery at Madras had arrived in England, that the present minister and his board of controul, thought fit to determine on the debt of 1777. The recorded proceedings at this time knew nothing of any debt to Benfield. There was his own testimony; there was the testimony of the list; there was the testimony of the nabob of Arcot against it. Yet such was the ministers' feeling of the true secret of this transaction, that they thought proper, in the teeth of all these testimonies, to give him licence to return to Madras. Here the ministers were under some embarrassment. Confounded between their resolution of rewarding the good services of Benfield's friends and associates in England, and the shame of sending that notorious incendiary to the court of the nabob of Arcot, to renew his intrigues against the British government, at the time they authorize his return, they forbid him under the severest penalties, from any conversation with the nabob or his ministers; that is, they forbid his communication with the very person on account of his dealings with whom they permit his return to that city. To overtop this contradiction, there is not a word restraining him from the freest intercourse with the nabob's second son, the real author of all that is done in the nabob's name; who, in conjunction with this very Benfield, has acquired an absolute dominion over that unhappy man, is able to persuade him to put his signature to whatever paper they please, and often without any communication of the contents. This management was detailed to them at full length by Lord Macartney, and they cannot pretend ignorance of it.*

I believe, after this exposure of facts, no man can entertain a doubt of the collusion of ministers with the corrupt interest of the delinquents in India. Whenever those in authority provide for the interest of any person, on the real but concealed state of his affairs, without regard to his avowed, public, and ostensible pretences, it must be presumed that they are in confederacy with him, because they act for him on the same fraudulent principles on which he acts for himself. It is plain, that the ministers were fully apprised of Benfield's real situation, which he had used means to conceal, whilst concealment answered his purposes. They were, or the person on whom they relied was, of the cabinet council of Benfield, in the very depth of all his mysteries. An honest magistrate compels men to abide by one story. An equitable judge would not hear of the claim of a man who had himself thought proper to renounce it. With such a judge his shuffling and prevarication would have damned his claims; such a judge never would have known, but in order to animadvert upon proceedings of that character.

I have thus laid before you, Mr. Speaker, I think with sufficient clearness, the connection of the ministers with Mr. Atkinson at the general election; I have laid open to you the connection of Atkinson with Benfield; I have shewn Benfield's employment of his wealth, in creating a parliamentary interest, to procure a ministerial protection; I have set before your eyes his large concern in the debt, his practices to hide that concern from the public eye, and the liberal protection which he has received from the minister. If this chain of circumstances does not lead you necessarily to conclude that the minister has

* Appendix, No. 6.

paid to the avarice of Benfield the services done by Benfield's connections to his ambition, I do not know any thing short of the confession of the party that can persuade you of his guilt. Clandestine and collusive practice can only be traced by combination and comparison of circumstances. To reject such combination and comparison is to reject the only means of detecting fraud; it is indeed to give it a patent and free licence to cheat with impunity.

I confine myself to the connection of ministers, mediately or immediately, with only two persons concerned in this debt. How many others, who support their power and greatness within and without doors, are concerned originally, or by transfers of these debts, must be left to general opinion. I refer to the reports of the select committee for the proceedings of some of the agents in these affairs, and their attempts, at least, to furnish ministers with the means of buying general courts, and even whole parliaments, in the gross.*

I know that the ministers will think it little less than acquittal, that they are not charged with having taken to themselves some part of the money of which they have made so liberal a donation to their partisans, though the charge may be indisputably fixed upon the corruption of their politics. For my part, I follow their crimes to that point to which legal presumptions and natural indications lead me, without considering what species of evil motive tends most to aggravate or to extenuate the guilt of their conduct. But if I am to speak my private sentiments, I think that in a thousand cases for one it would be far less mischievous to the public, and full as little dishonourable to themselves to be polluted with direct bribery, than thus to become a standing auxiliary to the oppression, usury, and peculation of multitudes, in order to obtain a corrupt support to their power. It is by bribing, not so often by being bribed, that wicked politicians bring ruin on mankind. Avarice is a rival to the pursuits of many. It finds a multitude of checks, and many opposers, in every walk of life. But the objects of ambition are for the few; and every person who aims at indirect profit, and therefore wants other protection than innocence and law, instead of its rival becomes its instrument. There is a natural allegiance and fealty due to this domineering paramount evil, from all the vassal vices, which acknowledge its superiority, and readily militate under its banners; and it is under that discipline alone that avarice is able to spread to any considerable extent, or to render itself a general public mischief. It is therefore no apology for ministers, that they have not been bought by the East India delinquents, but that they have only formed an alliance with them for screening each other from justice, according to the exigence of their several necessities. That they have done so is evident; and the junction of the power of office in England, with the abuse of authority in the east, has not only prevented even the appearance of redress to the grievances of India, but I wish it may not be found to have dulled, if not extinguished, the honour, the candour, the generosity, the good nature, which used formerly to characterize the people of England. I confess, I wish that some more feeling than I have yet observed for the sufferings of our fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects in that oppressed part of the world, had manifested itself in any one quarter of the kingdom, or in any one large description of men.

That these oppressions exist, is a fact no more denied, than it is resented as it ought to be. Much evil has been done in India under the British authority. What has been done to redress it? We are no longer surprised at any thing. We are above the unlearned and vulgar passion of admiration. But it will astonish posterity, when they read our opinions in our actions, that after years of inquiry we have found out that the sole grievance of India consisted in this, that the servants of the company there had not profited enough of their opportunities, nor drained it sufficiently of its treasures; when they shall hear that the very first and only important act of a commission specially named by act of parliament, is to charge upon an undone country, in favour of a handful of men in the humblest ranks of the public service, the enormous sum of perhaps four millions of sterling money.

It is difficult for the most wise and upright government to correct the abuses of remote delegated power, productive of unmeasured wealth, and protected by the boldness and strength of the same ill-got riches. These abuses, full of their own wild native vigour, will grow and flourish under mere neglect. But where the supreme authority, not content with winking at the rapacity of its inferior instruments, is so shameless and corrupt as openly to give bounties and premiums for disobedience to its laws; when it will not trust to the activity of avarice in the pursuit of its own gains; when it secures public robbery by all the careful jealousy and attention with which

* Second Report of Select (General Smith's) Committee.

it ought to protect property from such violence; the commonwealth then is become totally perverted from its purposes; neither God nor man will long endure it; nor will it long endure itself. In that case, there is an unnatural infection, a pestilential taint fermenting in the constitution of society, which fever and convulsions of some kind or other must throw off; or in which the vital powers, worsted in an unequal struggle, are pushed back upon themselves, and by a reversal of their whole functions, fester to gangrene, to death; and instead of what was but just now the delight and boast of the creation, there will be cast out in the face of the sun, a bloated, putrid, noisome, carcass, full of stench and poison, an offence, a horrour, a lesson to the world.

In my opinion, we ought not to wait for the fruitless instruction of calamity to enquire into the abuses which bring upon us ruin in the worst of its forms, in the loss of our fame and virtue. But the right honourable gentleman* says, in answer to all the powerful arguments of my honourable friend—"that this inquiry is of a delicate nature, and that the state will suffer detriment by the exposure of this transaction." But it is exposed; it is perfectly known in every member, in every particle, and in every way, except that which may lead to a remedy. He knows that the papers of correspondence are printed, and that they are in every hand.

He and delicacy are a rare and singular coalition. He thinks that to divulge our Indian politics, may be highly dangerous. He! the mover! the chairman! the reporter of the committee of secrecy! he that brought forth in the utmost detail, in several vast, printed folios, the most recondite parts of the politics, the military, the revenues of the British empire in India! With six great chopping bastards,† each as lusty as an infant Hercules, this delicate creature blushes at the sight of his new bridegroom, assumes a virgin delicacy; or, to use a more fit, as well as a more poetic comparison, the person so squeamish, so timid, so trembling lest the winds of heaven should visit too roughly, is expanded to broad sunshine, exposed like the sow of imperial augury, lying in the mud with all the prodigies of her fertility about her, as evidence of her delicate amours—*Triginta capitum fœtus enisa jacebat, alba solo recubans albi circum ubera nati.*

Whilst discovery of the misgovernment of others led to his own power, it was wise to enquire; it was safe to publish: there was then no delicacy; there was then no danger. But when his object is obtained, and in his imitation he has outdone the crimes that he had reprobated in volumes of reports, and in sheets of bills of pains and penalties; then concealment becomes prudence; and it concerns the safety of the state, that we should not know, in a mode of parliamentary cognizance, what all the world knows but too well, that is, in what manner he chooses to dispose of the public revenues to the creatures of his politics.

The debate has been long, and as much so on my part, at least, as on the part of those who have spoken before me. But long as it is, the more material half of the subject has hardly been touched on; that is, the corrupt and destructive system to which this debt has been rendered subservient, and which seems to be pursued with at least as much vigour and regularity as ever. If I considered your ease or my own, rather than the weight and importance of this question, I ought to make some apology to you, perhaps some apology to myself, for having detained your attention so long. I know on what ground I tread. This subject, at one time taken up with so much fervour and zeal, is no longer a favourite in this house. The house itself has undergone a great and signal revolution. To some the subject is strange and uncouth; to several harsh and distasteful; to the reliques of the last parliament it is a matter of fear and apprehension. It is natural for those who have seen their friends sink in the tornado which raged during the late shift of the monsoon, and have hardly escaped on the planks of the general wreck, it is but too natural for them, as soon as they make the rocks and quicksands of their former disasters, to put about their new-built barks, and, as much as possible, to keep aloof from this perilous lee shore.

But let us do what we please to put India from our thoughts, we can do nothing to separate it from our public interest and our national reputation. Our attempts to banish this importunate duty, will only make it return upon us again and again, and every time in a shape more unpleasant than the former. A government has been fabricated for that great province; the right honourable gentleman says, that therefore you ought not to examine into its conduct. Heavens! what an argument is this! We are not to examine into the conduct of the direction, because it is an old government: we are not to examine into this board

* Mr. Dundas.

† Six Reports of the Committee of Secrecy.

of controul because it is a new one. Then we are only to examine into the conduct of those who have no conduct to account for. Unfortunately the basis of this new government has been laid on old condemned delinquents, and its superstructure is raised out of prosecutors turned into protectors. The event has been such as might be expected. But if it had been otherwise constituted; had it been constituted even as I wished, and as the mover of this question had planned, the better part of the proposed establishment was in the publicity of its proceedings; in its perpetual responsibility to parliament. Without this check, what is our government at home, even awed, as every European government is, by an audience formed of the other states of Europe, by the applause or condemnation of the discerning and critical company before which it acts? But if the scene on the other side of the globe, which tempts, invites, almost compels to tyranny and rapine, be not inspected with the eye of a severe and unremitting vigilance, shame and destruction must ensue. For one, the worst event of this day, though it may deject, shall not break or subdue me. The call upon us is authoritative. Let who will shrink back, I shall be found at my post. Baffled, discountenanced, subdued, discredited, as the cause of justice and humanity is, it will be only the dearer to me. Whoever therefore shall at any time bring before you any thing towards the relief of our distressed fellow-citizens in India, and towards a subversion of the present most corrupt and oppressive system for its government, in me shall find, a weak, I am afraid, but a steady, earnest, and faithful assistant.

APPENDIX

No. 1.

CLAUSES OF MR. PITT'S BILL.

Referred to from p. 383.

Appointing Commissioners to enquire into the fees, gratuities, perquisites, emoluments, which are, or have been lately, received in the several public offices therein mentioned; to examine into any abuses which may exist in the same, &c.

And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said commissioners, or any two of them, and they are hereby impowered, authorized, and required, *to examine upon oath* (which oath they, or any two of them, are hereby authorized to administer) the several persons, of *all* descriptions, belonging to any of the officers or departments before mentioned, and *all other persons* whom the said commissioners, or any two of them, shall think fit to examine, touching *the business* of each office or department, and *the fees, gratuities, perquisites, and emoluments taken therein*, and touching all other matters and things necessary for the execution of the powers vested in the said commissioners by this act; *all which persons* are hereby required and directed punctually to attend the said commissioners, *at such time and place as they, or any two of them, shall appoint, and also to observe and execute such orders and directions* as the said commissioners, or any two of them, shall make or give for the purposes before mentioned.

And be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said commissioners, or any two of them, shall be, and are hereby impowered to examine into any corrupt and fraudulent practices, or other misconduct, committed by any person or persons concerned in the management of any of the offices or departments hereinbefore mentioned: and, for the better execution of this present act, the said commissioners, or *any two of them, are hereby authorized to meet and sit, from time to time, in such place or places as they shall find most convenient, with or without adjournment, and to send their precept or precepts, under their hands and seals, for any person or persons whatsoever, and for such books, papers, writings, or records, as they shall judge necessary for their information, relating to any of the offices or departments hereinbefore mentioned; and all bailiffs, constables, sheriffs, and other his majesty's officers, are hereby required to obey and execute such orders and precepts aforesaid, as shall be sent to them or any of them by the said commissioners, or any two of them, touching the premises.*

APPENDIX, No. 2.

Referred to from p. 385.

NABOB OF ARCOT'S DEBTS.

Mr. George Smith being asked, Whether the debts of the nabob of Arcot have increased since he knew Madras? he said, Yes,

they have. He distinguishes his debts into two sorts; those contracted before the year 1766, and those contracted from that year to the year in which he left Madras.—Being asked, What he thinks is the original amount of the old debts? he said, Between twenty-three and twenty-four lacs of pagodas, as well as he can recollect.—Being asked, What was the amount of that debt when he left Madras? he said, Between four and five lacs of pagodas, as he understood.—Being asked, What was the amount of the new debt when he left Madras? he said, In November, 1777, that debt amounted, according to the nabob's own account, and published at Chipauk, his place of residence, to sixty lacs of pagodas, independent of the old debt, on which debt of sixty lacs of pagodas, the nabob did agree to pay an interest of twelve per cent. per annum.—Being asked, Whether this debt was approved of by the court of directors? he said, He does not know it was.—Being asked, Whether the old debt was recognized by the court of directors? he said, Yes, it has been; and the court of directors have sent out repeated orders to the president and council of Madras, to enforce its recovery and payment.—Being asked, If the interest upon the new debt is punctually paid? he said, It was not during his residence at Madras, from 1777 to 1779, in which period he thinks no more than five per cent. interest was paid, in different dividends of two and one per cent.—Being asked, What is the usual course taken by the nabob, concerning the arrears of interest? he said, Not having ever lent him monies himself, he cannot fully answer as to the mode of settling the interest with him.

Being asked, Whether he has reason to believe the sixty lacs of pagodas was all principal money really and truly advanced to the nabob of Arcot, or a fictitious capital, made up of obligations given by him, where no money or goods were received, or which was increased by the uniting into it a greater interest than the twelve per cent. expressed to be due on the capital, he said, He has no reason to believe that the sum of sixty lacs of pagodas was lent in money or goods to the nabob, because that sum he thinks is of more value than all the money, goods, and chattels in the settlement; but he does not know in what mode or manner this debt of the nabob's was incurred or accumulated. Being asked, Whether it was not a general and well-grounded opinion at Madras, that a great part of this sum was accumulated by obligations, and was for services performed or to be performed for the nabob? he said, He has heard that a part of this debt was given for the purposes mentioned in the above question, but he does not know that it was so.—Being asked, Whether it was the general opinion of the settlement? he said, He cannot say that it was the general opinion, but it was the opinion of a considerable part of the settlement. Being asked, Whether it was the declared opinion of those that were concerned in the debt, or those that were not? he said, It was the opinion of both parties, at least such of them as he conversed with.—Being asked, Whether he has reason to believe that the interest really paid by the nabob, upon obligations given, or money lent, did not frequently exceed twelve per cent.?—he said, Prior to the first of August, 1774, he had had reason to believe, that a higher interest than twelve per cent. was paid by the nabob, on monies lent to him; but from and after that period, when the last act of parliament took place in India, he does not know that more than twelve per cent. had been paid by the nabob, or received from him.—Being asked, Whether it is not his opinion, that the nabob has paid more than twelve per cent. for money due since the first of August, 1774? he said, He has heard that he has, but he does not know it.—Being asked, Whether he has been told so by any considerable and weighty authority, that was like to know? he said, He has been so informed by persons who he believes had a very good opportunity of knowing it.—Being asked, Whether he was ever told so by the nabob of Arcot himself? he said, He does not recollect that the nabob of Arcot directly told him so, but from what he said, he did infer that he paid a higher interest than twelve per cent.

Mr. Smith being asked, Whether, in the course of trade, he ever sold any thing to the nabob of Arcot? he said, In the year 1775 he did sell to the nabob of Arcot pearls to the amount of 32,500 pagodas, for which the nabob gave him an order or tankah on the country of Tanjore, payable in six months, without interest.—Being asked, Whether, at the time he asked the nabob his price for the pearls, the nabob beat down that price, as dealers commonly do? he said, No; so far from it, he offered him more than he asked by 1,000 pagodas, and which he rejected. Being asked, Whether in settling a transaction of discount with the nabob's agent, he was not offered a greater discount than twelve per cent. he said, In discounting a soucar's bill for 180,000 pagodas, the nabob's agent did offer him a discount of twenty-four per cent. per annum, saying, that it was the usual rate of discount

paid by the nabob; but which he would not accept of, thinking himself confined by the act of parliament limiting the interest of monies to twelve per cent. and accordingly he discounted the bill at twelve per cent. per annum only.—Being asked, Whether he does not think those offers were made him, because the nabob thought he was a person of some consequence in the settlement? he said, Being only a private merchant, he apprehends that the offer was made to him more from its being a general practice, than from any opinion of his importance.

APPENDIX, No. 3.

Referred to from p. 390.

A bill for the better government of the territorial possessions and dependencies in India.

[*One of Mr. Fox's India bills.*]

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the nabob of Arcot, the rajah of Tanjore, or any other native protected prince in India, shall not assign, mortgage, or pledge any territory or land whatsoever, or the produce or revenue thereof, to any British subject whatsoever; neither shall it be lawful to and for any British subject whatsoever to take or receive any such assignment, mortgage, or pledge; and the same are hereby declared to be null and void; and all payments or deliveries of produce or revenue, under any such assignment, shall and may be recovered back by such native prince paying or delivering the same, from the person or persons receiving the same, or his or their representatives.

APPENDIX, No. 4.

Referred to from p. 399 and 403.

(copy.)

27th May, 1782.

Letter from the Committee of assigned Revenue, to the President and Select Committee, dated 27th May, 1782; with comparative statement, and minute thereon.

To the Right Honourable Lord Macartney, K.B. President and Governour, &c. Select Committee of Fort St. George.

My Lord, and Gentlemen,

Although we have, in obedience to your commands of the 5th January, regularly laid before you our proceedings at large, and have occasionally addressed you upon such points as required your resolutions or orders for our guidance, we still think it necessary to collect and digest, in a summary report, those transactions in the management of the assigned revenue, which have principally engaged our attention, and which, upon the proceeding, are too much intermixed with ordinary occurrences to be readily traced and understood.

Such a report may be formed with the greater propriety at this time, when your lordship, &c. have been pleased to conclude your arrangements for the rent of several of the nabob's districts. Our aim in it is briefly to explain the state of the Carnatic at the period of the nabob's assignment; the particular causes which existed, to the prejudice of that assignement, after it was made; and the measures which your lordship, &c. have, upon our recommendation, adopted for removing those causes, and introducing a more regular and beneficial system of management in the country.

Hyder Ali having entered the Carnatic with his whole force, about the middle of July, 1780, and employed fire and sword in its destruction for near eighteen months before the nabob's assignment took place, it will not be difficult to conceive the state of the country at that period. In those provinces which were fully exposed to the ravages of horse, scarce a vestige remained either of population or agriculture: such of the miserable inhabitants as escaped the fury of the sword were either carried into the Mysore country, or left to struggle under the horrours of famine. The Arcot and Trichinopoly districts began early to feel the effects of this desolating war. Tinnevelly, Madura, and Ramnadaporum, though little infested with Hyder's troops, became a prey to the incursions of the Polygars, who stript them of the greatest part of the revenues; Ongole, Nellore, and Palnaud, the only remaining districts, had suffered but in a small degree.

The misfortunes of war, however, were not the only evils which the Carnatic experienced. The nabob's aumildars, and other servants, appear to have taken advantage of the general confusion to enrich themselves. A very small part of the revenue was accounted for; and so high were the ordinary expenses of every district, that double the apparent produce of the whole country would not have satisfied them.

In this state, which we believe is no way exaggerated, the company took charge of the assigned countries. Their prospect of relief from the heavy burthens of the war, was indeed but little advanced by the nabob's concession; and the revenues of the Carnatic seemed in danger of being irrecoverably lost,

unless a speedy and entire change of system could be adopted.

On our minutes of the 21st January, we treated the subject of the assignment at some length, and pointed out the mischiefs which, in addition to the effects of the war, had arisen from what we conceived to be wrong and oppressive management.—We used the freedom to suggest an entire alteration in the mode of realizing the revenues. We proposed a considerable and immediate reduction of expenses, and a total change of the principal aumildars who had been employed under the nabob.

Our ideas had the good fortune to receive your approbation; but the removal of the nabob's servants being thought improper at that particular period of the collections, we employed our attention chiefly in preserving what revenue was left the country, and acquiring such materials as might lead to a more perfect knowledge of its former and present state.

These pursuits, as we apprehended, met with great obstructions from the conduct of the nabob's servants. The orders they received were evaded under various pretexts; no attention was paid to the strong and repeated applications made to them for the accounts of their management; and their attachment to the company's interest appeared, in every instance, so feeble, that we saw no prospect whatever of success, but in the appointment of renters under the company's sole authority.

Upon this principle we judged it expedient to recommend, that such of the nabob's districts as were in a state to be farmed out, might be immediately let by a public advertisement, issued in the company's name, and circulated through every province of the Carnatic; and with the view of encouraging bidders, we proposed, that the countries might be advertised for the whole period of the nabob's assignment, and the security of the company's protection promised, in the fullest manner, to such persons as might become renters.

This plan had the desired effect; and the attempts which were secretly made to counteract it, afforded an unequivocal proof of its necessity: but the advantages resulting from it were more pleasingly evinced, by the number of proposals that were delivered, and by the terms which were in general offered for the districts intended to be farmed out.

Having so far attained the purposes of the assignment, our attention was next turned to the heavy expenses entailed upon the different provinces; and here, we confess, our astonishment was raised to the highest pitch. In the Trichinopoly country, the standing disbursements appeared, by the nabob's own accounts, to be one lac of rupees more than the receipts. In other districts, the charges were not in so high a proportion, but still rated on a most extravagant scale; and we saw, by every account that was brought before us, the absolute necessity of retrenching considerably in all the articles of expense.

Our own reason, aided by such inquiries as we were able to make, suggested the alterations we have recommended to your lordship, &c. under this head. You will observe, that we have not acted sparingly; but we chose rather, in cases of doubt, to incur the hazard of retrenching too much, than too little; because it would be easier, after any stated allowance for expenses, to add what might be necessary, than to diminish. We hope, however, there will be no material increase in the articles as they now stand.

One considerable charge upon the nabob's country was for extraordinary sibbendies, sepoys, and horsemen, who appeared to us to be a very unnecessary incumbrance on the revenue. Your lordship, &c. have determined to receive such of these people as will inlist into the company's service, and discharge the rest. This measure will not only relieve the country of a heavy burthen, but tend greatly to fix in the company that kind of authority, which is requisite for the due collection of the revenues.

In consequence of your determination respecting the nabob's sepoys, &c. every charge under that head has been struck out of our account of expenses. If the whole number of these people be enlisted by the company, there will probably be no more than sufficient to complete their ordinary military establishment. But should the present reduction of the nabob's artillery render it expedient, after the war, to make any addition to the company's establishment, for the purposes of the assigned countries; the expense of such addition, whatever it be, must be deducted from the present account of savings.

In considering the charges of the several districts, in order to establish better regulations, we were careful to discriminate those incurred for troops kept, or supposed to be kept up for the defence of the country, from those of the sibbendy, servants, &c. for the cultivation of the lands, and the collection of the revenues, as well as to pay attention to such of the established customs of the country, ancient privileges of the inhabitants, and public charities, as were necessarily allowed, and appeared proper to be continued; but which, under the nabob's government, were not only

rated much higher, but had been blended under one confused and almost unintelligible title of Expenses of the Districts; so joined, perhaps, to afford pleas and means of secreting and appropriating great part of the revenues to other purposes than fairly appeared; and certainly betraying the utmost neglect and mismanagement, as giving latitude for every species of fraud and oppression. Such a system has, in the few latter years of the nabob's necessities, brought all his countries into that situation, from which nothing but the most rigid œconomy, strict observance of the conduct of managers, and the most conciliating attention to the rights of the inhabitants can possibly recover them.

It now only remains for us to lay before your lordship, &c. the inclosed statement of the sums at which the districts lately advertised have been let, compared with the accounts of their produce delivered by the nabob, and entered on our proceedings of the 21st January. Likewise a comparative view of the former and present expenses.

The nabob's accounts of the produce of these districts state, as we have some reason to think, the sums which former renters engaged to pay to him (and which were seldom, if ever, made good) and not the sums actually produced by the districts; yet we have the satisfaction to observe, that the present aggregate rents, upon an average, are equal to those accounts. Your lordship, &c. cannot indeed expect, that, in the midst of the danger, invasion, and distress, which assail the Carnatic on every side, the renters now appointed will be able at present to fulfil the terms of their leases; but we trust, from the measures we have taken, that very little, if any, of the actual collections will be lost, even during the war; and that on the return of peace and tranquillity, the renters will have it in their power fully to perform their respective agreements.

We much regret that the situation of the Arcot province will not admit of the same settlement which has been made for the other districts; but the enemy being in possession of the capital, together with several other strong holds, and having entirely desolated the country, there is little room to hope for more from it, than a bare subsistence to the few garrisons we have left there.

We shall not fail to give our attention towards obtaining every information respecting this province, that the present times will permit; and to take the first opportunity to propose such arrangements for the management as we may think eligible.

We have the honour to be
Your most obedient
Humble servants,

CHARLES OAKLEY,
EYLES IRWIN,
HALL PLUMER,
DAVID HALIBURTON,
GEORGE MOUBRAY.

Fort St. George, 27th May, 1782.

A true copy,
J. Hudleston, Sec.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Revenues and Expenses of the Nellore, Ongole, Patnaud, Trichinopoly, Madura, and Tennevelly Countries, while in the Hands of the Nabob, with those of the same Countries on the Terms of the Leases lately granted for Four Years to commence with the beginning of the Phazely 1192, or the 12th July, 1782. Abstracted from the Accounts received from the Nabob, and from the Rents stipulated for, and Expenses allowed by the present Leases.

	Gross Revenue.		Expenses.			Net Revenue.		
	Annual Gross Rent by the Nabob's Account, average of the Four Years immediately preceding the present War.	Annual Rent by the present Leases, at an Average of Four Years.	Annual Expenses by the Nabob's Accounts.	Annual Expenses allowed by the present Leases at an Estimate.	Reduction in the annual Expenses.	Net Revenue by the Nabob's Accounts.	Net Revenue by the present Leases.	Increase of Net Revenue.
	Star Pagodas.	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*	*Star Pagodas.*
Nellore and Sevapully	3,22,830	3,61,900	1,98,794	33,000	1,65,794	1,24,036	3,28,900	2,04,864
Ongole	1,10,967 (a)	55,000	88,254	—	88,254	22,713	55,000	32,287
Patnaud	51,355	53,500	25,721	5,688	20,033	25,634	47,862	22,168
Trichinopoly	2,89,993 (b)	2,73,214	2,92,148	19,143	2,63,005	7,845	2,54,071	2,46,226
Madura	1,02,756	60,290	63,71	12,037	51,673	39,046	48,253	9,207
Tennevelly	5,65,537	5,79,713	1,64,098	70,368	93,730	4,01,439	5,09,345	1,57,906
Total	14,43,438	13,83,617	8,22,725	1,40,246	6,92,479	6,20,713	12,43,371	6,22,658

N. B. In this statement, Madras Pagodas are calculated at 10 per cent. Batta, Chuckrums at 2-3ds of a Porto Nova Pagoda, which are reckoned at (a) 115 per 100 Star Pagodas, and Rupees at 350 per 100 Star Pagodas. To avoid fractions, the nearest integral numbers have been taken.

In this statement, the Ongole country, though it is included under the head of gross revenue, has been let for a certain sum, exclusive of charges.

If the expenses specified in the Nabob's vassool accounts for this district are added, the present gross revenue even would appear to exceed the Nabob's—and as the country is only let for one year, there may hereafter be an increase of its revenue.

(b) The Trichinopoly countries let for the above sum, exclusive of the expenses of Sibbendy and Saderwared, amounting by the Nabob's accounts to rupees 1,30,00 per annum, which are to be defrayed by the renter.—And the jaghires of Amur ul Omrah, and the Begum, are not included in the present lease.

Signed { CHARLES OAKLEY, EYLES IRWIN, HALL PLUMER, DAVID HALIBURTON, GEO. MOUBRAY.

Fort St. George, 27th May, 1782.

APPENDIX, No. 5.

Referred to from p. 404.

Case of certain Persons renting the assigned Lands under the authority of the East India Company.

Extract of a Letter from the President and Council of Fort St. George, 25th May, 1783.

"ONE of them [the renters] Ram Chunder Raus, was indeed one of those unfortunate rajahs, whose country, *by being near to the territories of the nabob*, forfeited its title to independence; and became the prey of ambition and cupidity. This man, though not able to resist the company's arms, *employed in such a deed at the nabob's instigation*, had industry and ability. He acquired, *by a series of services*, even the confidence of the nabob; who suffered him to *rent a part of the country of which he had deprived him of the property*. This man had afforded no motive for his rejection by the nabob, but that of being ready to engage with the company; a motive most powerful indeed, but not to be avowed."

[This is the person whom the English instruments of the nabob of Arcot have had the audacity to charge with a corrupt transaction with Lord Macartney; and, in support of that charge, to produce a forged letter from his lordship's steward. The charge and letter the reader may see in this appendix, under the proper head. It is asserted, by the unfortunate prince above mentioned, that the company first settled on the coast of Coromandel under the protection of one of his ancestors. If this be true (and it is far from unlikely) the world must judge of the return the descendant has met with. The case of another of the victims, given up by the ministry, though not altogether so striking as the former, is worthy of attention. It is that of the renter of the province of Nellore.]

"It is with a wantonness of falsehood, and indifference to detection, asserted to you, in proof of the validity of the nabob's objections, that this man's failures had already forced us to remove him; though in fact he has continued invariably in office; though our *greatest supplies have been received from him*; and that, in the disappointment of your remittances [the remittances from Bengal] and of other resources, the species sent us *from Nellore alone* has sometimes enabled us to carry on the public business; and that the *present expedition against the French* must, without *this* assistance from the assignment, have been laid aside, or delayed until it might have become too late."

[This man is by the ministry given over to the mercy of persons capable of making charges on him, "*with a wantonness of falsehood, and indifference to detection.*" What is likely to happen to him and the rest of the victims, may appear by the following]

Letter to the Governour General and Council, March 13th, 1782.

"THE speedy termination to which the people were taught to look, of the company's interference in the revenues, and the vengeance denounced against those who, contrary to the mandate of the durbar, should be connected with them, as reported by Mr. Sulivan, may, as much as the former exactions and oppressions of the nabob in the revenue, as reported by the commander in chief, have deterred some of the fittest men from offering to be concerned in it.

"The timid disposition of the Hindoo natives of this country was not likely to be insensible to the specimen of that vengeance given by his excellency the amur, who, upon the mere rumour that a Bramin, of the name of Appagee Row, had given proposals to the company for the rentership of Vellore, had the temerity to send for him, and to put him in confinement.

"A man thus seized by the nabob's seapoys within the walls of Madras, gave a general alarm; and government found it necessary to promise the protection of the company, in order to calm the apprehensions of the people."

APPENDIX, No. 6.

Referred to from p. 404.

Extract of a Letter from the Council and Select Committee at Fort St. George, to the Governour General and Council, dated 25th May, 1783.

IN the prosecution of our duty, we beseech you to consider as an act of strict and necessary justice, previous to reiteration of your orders for the surrender of the assignment, how far it would be likely to affect third persons, who do not appear to have committed any breach of their engagements. You command us to compel our aumils to deliver over their respective charges as shall be appointed by the nabob, or to retain their trust under his sole authority, if he shall choose to confirm them. These aumils are really renters, they were appointed in the room of the nabob's

aumils, and contrary to his wishes; they have already been rejected by him, and are therefore not likely to be confirmed by him. They applied to this government, in consequence of public advertisements in our name, as possessing in this instance the joint authority of the nabob and the company, and have entered into mutual and strict covenants with us, and we with them, relative to the certain districts not actually in the possession of the enemy; by which covenants, as they are bound to the punctual payment of their rents, and due management of the country, so we, and our constituents, and the public faith, are in like manner bound to maintain them in the enjoyment of their leases, during the continuance of the term; that term was for five years agreeably to the words of the assignment, which declare that the time of renting shall be for three or five years, as the governour shall settle with the renters.—Their leases cannot be legally torn from them. Nothing but their previous breach of a part could justify our breach of the whole; such a stretch and abuse of power would indeed not only savour of the assumption of sovereignty, but of arbitrary and oppressive despotism. In the present contest, whether the nabob be guilty, or we be guilty, the renters are not guilty. Whichever of the contending parties has broken the condition of the assignment, the renters have not broken the condition of their leases. These men, in conducting the business of the assignment, have acted in opposition to the designs of the nabob, in despite of the menaces denounced against all who should dare to oppose the mandates of the durbar justice. Gratitude and humanity require that provision should be made by you, before you set the nabob's ministers loose on the country, for the protection of the victims devoted to their vengeance.

Mr. Benfield, to secure the permanency of his power, and the perfection of his schemes, thought it necessary to render the nabob an absolute stranger to the state of his affairs. He assured his highness, that full justice was not done to the strength of his sentiments, and the keenness of his attacks, in the translations that were made by the company's servants from the original Persian of his letters. He therefore proposed to him, that they should for the future be transmitted in English.—Of the English language or writing his highness, or the ameer, cannot read one word, though the latter can converse in it with sufficient fluency. The Persian language, as the language of the Mahomedan conquerours, and of the court of Delhi, as an appendage or signal of authority, was at all times particularly affected by the nabob:—it is the language of all acts of state, and all public transactions, among the mussulman chiefs of Hindostan. The nabob thought to have gained no inconsiderable point, in procuring the correspondence from our predecessors to the rajah of Tanjore to be changed from the Maratta language, which that Hindoo prince understands, to the Persian, which disclaims understanding. To force the rajah to the nabob's language, was gratifying the latter with a new species of subserviency. He had formerly contended with considerable anxiety, and it was thought no inconsiderable cost, for particular forms of address to be used towards him in that language. But all of a sudden, in favour of Mr. Benfield, he quits his former affections, his habits, his knowledge, his curiosity, the increasing mistrust of age, to throw himself upon the generous candour, the faithful interpretation, the grateful return and eloquent organ of Mr. Benfield!—*Mr. Benfield relates and reads what he pleases to his excellency the Ameer ul Omrah—his excellency communicates with the nabob his father, in the language the latter understands. Through two channels so pure, the truth must arrive at the nabob in perfect refinement; through this double trust, his highness receives whatever impression it may be convenient to make on him: he abandons his signature to whatever paper they tell him contains, in the English language, the sentiments with which they had inspired him. He thus is surrounded on every side. He is totally at their mercy, to believe what is not true, and to subscribe to what he does not mean. There is no system so new, so foreign to his intentions, that they may not pursue in his name, without possibility of detection: for they are cautious of who approach him, and have thought prudent to decline, for him, the visits of the governour*, even upon the usual solemn and acceptable occasion of delivering to his highness the company's letters. *Such is the complete ascendency gained by Mr. Benfield.* It may be partly explained by the facts observed already some years ago by Mr. Benfield himself in regard to the nabob, of the infirmities natural to his advanced age, joined to the decays of his constitution. To this ascendency, in proportion as it grew, must chiefly be ascribed, if not the origin, at least the continuance and increase, of the nabob's disunion with this presidency; a disunion which creates the importance, and subserves the resentments of Mr. Benfield; *and an ascendency which, if you effect the surrender of the assignment, will entirely leave the exercise*

of power, and accumulation of fortune, at his boundless discretion; to him, and to the Ameer-ul-Omrah, and to Syed Assam Cawn, the assignment would in fact be surrendered. HE WILL (IF ANY) BE THE SOUCAR SECURITY; *and security in this country is counterscured by possession. You would not choose to take the assignment from the company, to give it to individuals.* Of the impropriety of its returning to the nabob, Mr. Benfield would now again argue from his former observations, that under his highness's management, his country declined, his people emigrated, his revenues decreased, and his country was rapidly approaching to a state of political insolvency. Of Syed Assam Cawn, we judge only from the observations this letter already contains. But of the other two persons [Ameer-ul-Omrah and Mr. Benfield] we undertake to declare, not as parties in a cause, or even as voluntary witnesses, but as executive officers, reporting to you, in the discharge of our duty, and under the impression of the sacred obligation which binds us to truth, as well as to justice, that, from every observation of their principles and dispositions, and every information of their character and conduct, they have prosecuted projects to the injury and danger of the company and individuals; *that it would be improper to trust, and dangerous to employ them, in any public or important situation; that the tranquillity of the Carnatic requires a restraint to the power of the ameer; and that the company, whose service and protection Mr. Benfield has repeatedly and recently forfeited, would be more secure against danger and confusion, if he were removed from their several presidencies.*

[After the above solemn declaration from so weighty an authority, the principal object of that awful and deliberate warning, instead of "being removed from the several presidencies," is licensed to return to one of the principal of those presidencies, and the grand theatre of the operations on account of which the presidency recommends his total removal. The reason given is for the accommodation of that very debt which has been the chief instrument of his dangerous practices, and the main cause of all the confusions in the company's government.]

APPENDIX, No. 7.

Referred to from p. 406, and p. 408.

Extracts from the Evidence of Mr. Petrie, late Resident for the Company at Tanjore, given to the Select Committee, relative to the Revenues and State of the Country, &c. &c.

9th May, 1782.

WILLIAM PETRIE, Esq. attending according to order, was asked, In what station he was in the company's service? he said, He went to India in the year 1765, a writer upon the Madras establishment; he was employed, during the former war with Hyder Ali, in the capacity of paymaster and commissary to part of the army, and was afterwards paymaster and commissary to the army in the first siege of Tanjore, and the subsequent campaigns; then secretary to the secret department from 1772 to 1775; he came to England in 1775, and returned again to Madras the beginning of 1778; he was resident at the durbar of the rajah of Tanjore from that time to the month of May; and from that time to January 1780 was chief of Nagore and Carrecal, the first of which was received from the rajah of Tanjore, and the second was taken from the French.—Being asked, Who sent him to Tanjore? he said, Sir Thomas Rumbold, and the Secret Committee.—Being then asked, Upon what errand? he said, He went first up with a letter from the company to the rajah of Tanjore; he was directed to give the rajah the strongest assurances that he should be kept in possession of his country, and every privilege to which he had been restored; he was likewise directed to negotiate with the rajah of Tanjore for the cession of the seaport and district of Nagore, in lieu of the town and district of Devicotta, which he had promised to Lord Pigot: these were the principal, and to the best of his recollection at present the only objects in view, when he was first sent up to Tanjore. In the course of his stay at Tanjore other matters of business occurred between the company and the rajah, which came under his management as resident at that durbar. Being asked, Whether the rajah did deliver up to him the town and the annexed districts of Nagore voluntarily, or whether he was forced to it? he said, When he made the first proposition to the rajah, agreeable to the directions he had received from the secret committee at Madras, in the most free, open, and liberal manner, the rajah told him the seaport of Nagore was entirely at the service of his benefactors the company, and that he was happy in having that opportunity of testifying his gratitude to them; these may be supposed to be words of course, but from every experience which he had of the rajah's mind and conduct, whilst he was at Tanjore, he has rea-

son to believe that his declarations of gratitude to the company were perfectly sincere; he speaks of the town of Nagore at present, and a certain district, not of the districts to the amount of which they afterwards received. The rajah asked him, To what amount he expected a jaghire to the company: And the witness further said, That he acknowledged to the committee that he was not instructed upon that head; that he wrote for orders to Madras, and was directed to ask the rajah for a jaghire to a certain amount; that this gave rise to a long negociation, the rajah representing to him his inability to make such a gift to the company as the secret committee at Madras seemed to expect; while he (the witness) on the other hand, was directed to make as good a bargain as he could for the company. From the view that he then took of the rajah's finances, from the situation of his country, and from the load of debt which pressed hard upon him, he believes he at different times, in his correspondence with the government, represented the necessity of their being moderate in their demands, and it was at last agreed to accept of the town of Nagore, valued at a certain annual revenue, and a jaghire annexed to the town, the whole amounting to 2,50,000 rupees.—Being asked, Whether it did turn out so valuable? he said, He had not a doubt but it would turn out more, as it was let for more than that to farmers at Madras, if they had managed the districts properly, *but they were strangers to the manners and customs of the people; when they came down they oppressed the inhabitants, and threw the whole district into confusion; the inhabitants, many of them, left the country, and deserted the cultivation of their lands, of course the farmers were disappointed of their collections, and they have since failed, and the company have lost a considerable part of what the farmers were to pay for the jaghire.* Being asked, Who these farmers were? he said, One of them was the renter of the St. Thomé district, near Madras, and the other, and the most responsible, was a Madras dubash.—Being asked, Who he was dubash to? he said, To Mr. Cassmajor.

Being asked, Whether the lease was made upon higher terms than the district was rated to him by the rajah? he said, It was.—Being then asked, What reason was assigned why the district was not kept under the former management by amildars, or let to persons in the Tanjore country acquainted with the district? he said, No reasons were assigned: he was directed from Madras to advertise them to be let to persons of the country; but before he received any proposal, he received accounts that they were let at Madras in consequence of public advertisements which had been made there: he believes, indeed, there were very few men in those districts responsible enough to have been entrusted with the management of those lands. Being asked, Whether, at the time he was authorised to negotiate for Nagore in the place of Deviootta, Deviootta was given up to the rajah? he said, No.—Being asked, Whether the rajah of Tanjore did not frequently desire that the districts of Arné and Hanymantygoodé should be restored to him agreeable to treaty, and the company's orders to Lord Pigot? he said, Many a time; and he transmitted his representations regularly to Madras.—Being then asked, Whether those places were restored to him? he said, Not while he was in India.

Being asked, Whether he was not authorized and required by the presidency at Madras to demand a large sum of money over and above the four lacs of pagodas that were to be annually paid by a grant of the rajah, made in the time of Lord Pigot? he said, He was; to the amount, he believes, of four lacs of pagodas, commonly known by the name of deposit-money.—Being asked, Whether the rajah did not frequently plead his inability to pay that money? he said, He did every time he mentioned it, and complained loudly of the demand.—Being asked, Whether he thinks those complaints were well founded? he says, He thinks the rajah of Tanjore was not only not in a state of ability to pay the deposit-money, but that the annual payment of four lacs of pagodas was more than his revenues could afford.—Being asked, Whether he was not frequently obliged to borrow money, in order to pay the instalments of the annual payments, and such parts as he paid of the deposit? he said, Yes, he was.—Being asked, Where he borrowed the money? he said, He believes principally from soucars or native bankers, and some at Madras, as he told him.—Being asked, Whether he told him that his credit was very good, and that he borrowed upon moderate interest? he said, That he told him he found great difficulties in raising money, and was obliged to borrow at a most exorbitant interest, even some of it at 48 per cent. and he believes not a great deal under it: *he desired him (the witness) to speak to one of the soucars or bankers of Tanjore, to accommodate him with a loan of money; that man shewed him an account between him and the rajah, from which it appeared that he charged 48 per cent. besides compound interest.*——Being asked, Whether the sums due were large? he said, Yes, they were considerable;

though he does not recollect the amount.—Being asked, Whether the banker lent the money? he said, He would not, unless the witness could procure him payment of his old arrears.

Being asked, What notice did the government of Madras take of the king of Tanjore's representations of the state of his affairs, and his inability to pay? he said, He does not recollect that, in their correspondence with him, there was any reasoning upon the subject; and in his correspondence with Sir Thomas Rumbold, upon the amount of the jaghire, he seemed very desirous of adapting the demand of government to the rajah's circumstances; but whilst he staved at Tanjore, the rajah was not exonerated from any part of his burthens.—Being asked, Whether they ever desired the rajah to make up a statement of his accounts, disbursements, debts, and payments, to the company, in order to ascertain whether the country was able to pay the increasing demands upon it? he said, Through him he is certain they never did.—Being then asked, If he ever heard whether they did through any one else? he said, He never did.

Being asked, Whether the rajah is not bound to furnish the cultivators of land with seed for their crops, according to the custom of the country? he said, *The king of Tanjore, as proprietor of the land, always makes advances of money for seed for the cultivation of the land.*—Being then asked, If money beyond his power of furnishing should be extorted from him, might it not prevent, in the first instance, the means of cultivating the country? he said, It certainly does, *he knows it for a fact; and he knows that when he left the country there were several districts which were uncultivated from that cause.* Being asked, Whether it is not necessary to be at a considerable expense in order to keep up the mounds and water-courses? he said, *A very considerable one annually.*—Being asked, What would be the consequence if money should fail for that? he said, *In the first instance the country would be partially supplied with water, some districts would be overflowed, and others would be parched.*—Being asked, Whether there is not a considerable dam called the Anicut, on the keeping up of which the prosperity of the country greatly depends, and which requires a great expense? he said, Yes, there is; the whole of the Tanjore country is admirably well supplied with water, nor can he conceive any method could be fallen upon more happily adapted to the cultivation and prosperity of the country; but, as the Anicut is the source of that prosperity, any injury done to that must essentially affect all the other works in the country; it is a most stupendous piece of masonry; but from the very great floods frequently requiring repairs, which if neglected not only the expense of repairing must be greatly increased, but a general injury done to the whole country.—Being asked, Whether that dam has been kept in as good preservation since the prevalence of the English government as before? he said, From his own knowledge he cannot tell, but from every thing he has read or heard of the former prosperity and opulence of the kings of Tanjore, he should suppose not.—Being asked, Whether he does not know of several attempts that have been made to prevent the repair, and even to damage the work? he said, the rajah himself frequently complained of that to him, and he has likewise heard it from others at Tanjore.—Being asked, who it was that attempted those acts of violence? he said, He was told it was the inhabitants of the nabob's country adjoining to the Anicut.—Being asked, Whether they were not set on or instigated by the nabob? he answered, The rajah said so.—And being asked, What steps the president and council took to punish the authors, and prevent those violences? he said, to the best of his recollection, the governour told him he would make inquiries into it, but he does not know that any inquiries were made: that Sir Thomas Rumbold, the governour, informed him that he had laid his representations with respect to the Anicut before the nabob, who denied that his people had given any interruption to the repairs of that work

10th May.

Being asked, What he thinks the real clear receipt of the revenues of Tanjore were worth when he left it? he said, He cannot say what was the net amount, as he does not know the expense of the rajah's collection, but while he was at Tanjore he understood from the rajah himself, and from his ministers, that the gross collection did not exceed nine lacs of pagodas, (£ 360,000.)—Being asked, Whether he thinks the country could pay the eight lacs of pagodas which had been demanded to be paid in the course of one year? he said, Clearly not.—Being asked, Whether there was not an attempt made to remove the rajah's minister, upon some delay in payment of the deposit? he said, The governour of Madras wrote to that effect, which he represented to the rajah.—Being asked, Who was mentioned to succeed to the minister that then

was, in case he should be removed? he said, When Sir Hector Munro came afterwards to Tanjore, the old daubiere was mentioned, and recommended to the rajah as successor to his then dewan.—Being asked, Of what age was the daubiere at that time? he said, Of a very great age, upwards of fourscore.—Being asked, Whether a person called Kanonga Saba Pilla was not likewise named? he said, Yes, he was, he was recommended by Sir Thomas Rumbold; and one recommendation, as well as I can recollect, went through me.—Being asked, What was the reason of his being recommended? he said, He undertook to pay off the rajah's debts, and to give security for the regular payment of the rajah's instalments to the company.—Being asked, Whether he offered to give any security for preserving the country from oppression, and for supporting the dignity of the rajah and his people? he said, He does not know that he did, or that it was asked of him.—Being asked, Whether he was a person agreeable to the rajah? he said, He was not.—Being asked, Whether he was not a person who had fled out of the country to avoid the resentment of the rajah? he said, He was.——Being asked, Whether he was not charged by the rajah with mal-practices, and breach of trust relative to his effects? he said, He was; but he told the governour that he would account for his conduct, and explain every thing to the satisfaction of the rajah.—Being asked, Whether the rajah did not consider this man as in the interest of his enemies, and particularly of the nabob of Arcot and Mr. Benfield? he said, He does not recollect that he did mention that to him; he remembers to have heard him complaim of a transaction between Kanonga Saba Pilla and Mr. Benfield; but he told him he had been guilty of a variety of mal-practices in his administration, that he had oppressed the people, and defrauded him.—Being asked, In what branch of business the rajah had formerly employed him? he said, He was at one time, he believes, renter of the whole country, was supposed to have great influence with the rajah, and was in fact dewan some time.—Being asked, Whether the nomination of that man was not particularly odious to the rajah? he said, He found the rajah's mind so exceedingly averse to that man, that he believes he would almost as soon have submitted to his being deposed, as to submit to the nomination of that man to be his prime minister.

13th May.

Mr. Petrie being asked, Whether he was informed by the rajah, or by others, at Tanjore or Madras, that Mr. Benfield, whilst he managed the revenues at Tanjore, during the usurpation of the nabob, did not treat the inhabitants with great rigour? he said, He did hear from the rajah, that Mr. Benfield did treat the inhabitants with rigour during the time he had any thing to do with the administration of the revenues of Tanjore.—Being asked, if he recollects in what particulars? he said, The rajah particularly complained, that grain had been delivered out to the inhabitants, for the purposes of cultivation, at a higher price than the market price of grain in the country; he cannot say the actual difference of price, but it struck him at the time as something very considerable.—Being asked, Whether that money was all recovered from the inhabitants? he said, The rajah of Tanjore told him, that the money was all recovered from the inhabitants.—Being asked, Whether he did not hear that the nabob exacted from the country of Tanjore, whilst he was in possession of it? he said, From the accounts which he received at Tanjore, of the revenues for a number of years past, it appeared, that the nabob collected from the country, while he was in possession, rather more than 16 lacs of pagodas annually; whereas when he was at Tanjore, it did not yield more than 9 lacs.—Being asked, From whence that difference arose? he said, When Tanjore was conquered for the nabob, he has been told that many thousand of the native inhabitants fled from the country, some into the country of Mysore, and others into the dominions of the Marattas; he understood from the same authority, that while the nabob was in possession of the country, many inhabitants from the Carnatic, allured by the superiour fertility and opulence of Tanjore, and encouraged by the nabob, took up their residence there, which enabled the nabob to cultivate the whole country; and, upon the restoration of the rajah, he has heard that the Carnatic inhabitants were carried back to their own country, which left a considerable blank in the population, which was not replaced while he was there, principally owing to an opinion which prevailed through the country, that the rajah's government was not to be permanent, but that another revolution was fast approaching.—During the nabob's government, the price of grain was considerably higher (owing to a very unusual scarcity in the Carnatic) than when he was in Tanjore.—Being asked, Whether he was ever in the Marawar country? he said, Yes; he was commissary to the army in that expedition.—

Being asked, Whether that country was much wasted by the war? he said, Plunder was not permitted to the army, nor did the country suffer from its operations, except in causing many thousands of the inhabitants who had been employed in the cultivation of the country, to leave it.—Being asked, Whether he knows what is done with the palace and inhabitants of Ramnaut? he said, The town was taken by storm, but not plundered by the troops; it was immediately delivered up to the nabob's eldest son. Being asked, Whether great riches were not supposed to be in that palace and temple? he said, It was universally believed so.—Being asked, What account was given of them? he said, He cannot tell; every thing remained in the possession of the nabob.—Being asked, What became of the children and women of the family of the prince of that country? he said, The rajah was a minor; the government was in the hands of the ranny, his mother; from general report he has heard they were carried to Trichinopoly, and placed in confinement there.—Being asked, Whether he perceived any difference in the face of the Carnatic when he first knew it, and when he last knew it? he said, He thinks he did, particularly in its population.—Being asked, Whether it was better or worse? he said, It was not so populous.—Being asked, What is the condition of the nabob's eldest son? he said, He was in the Black Town of Madras, when he left the country.—Being asked, Whether he was entertained there in a manner suitable to his birth and expectations? he said, No; he lived there without any of those exteriour marks of splendour which princes of his rank in India are particularly fond of.—Being asked, Whether he has not heard that his appointments were poor and mean? he said, He has heard that they were not equal to his rank and expectations.—Being asked, Whether he had any share in the government? he said, He believes none; for some years past the nabob has delegated most of the powers of government to his second son.—Being asked, Whether the rajah did not complain to him of the behaviour of Mr. Benfield to himself personally; and what were the particulars? he said, He did so, and related to him the following particulars: About fifteen days after Lord Pigot's confinement, Mr. Benfield came to Tanjore, and delivered the rajah two letters from the then governour, Mr. Stratton, one public, and the other private; he demanded an immediate account of the presents which had been made to Lord Pigot, payment of the tunkahs, which he (Mr. Benfield) had received from the nabob upon the country; and that the rajah should only write such letters to the Madras government as Mr. Benfield should approve, and give to him: the rajah answered, that he did not acknowledge the validity of any demands made by the nabob upon the country; that those tunkahs related to accounts which he (the rajah) had no concern with; that he never had given Lord Pigot any presents, but Lord Pigot had given him many; and that, as to his correspondence with the Madras government, he would not trouble Mr. Benfield, because he would write his letters himself.—That the rajah told the witness, that by reason of this answer he was much threatened, in consequence of which he desired Colonel Harper, who then commanded at Tanjore, to be present at his next interview with Mr. Benfield; when Mr. Benfield denied many parts of the preceding conversation, and threw the blame upon his interpreter Comroo. When Mr. Benfield found (as the rajah informed him) that he could not carry these points, which had brought him to Tanjore, he prepared to set off for Madras; that the rajah sent him a letter which he had drawn out, in answer to one which Mr. Benfield had brought him; that Mr. Benfield disapproved of the answer, and returned it by Comroo to the durbar, who did not deliver it into the rajah's hands, but threw it upon the ground, and expressed himself improperly to him.

Being asked, Whether it was at the king of Tanjore's desire, that such persons as Mr. Benfield and Comroo had been brought into his presence? he said, The rajah told him, that when Lord Pigot came to Tanjore, to restore him to his dominions, Comroo, without being sent for, or desired to come to the palace, had found means to get access to his person; he made an offer of introducing Mr. Benfield to the rajah, which he declined.—Being asked, Whether the military officer commanding there protected the rajah from the intrusion of such people? he said, The rajah did not tell him that he called upon the military officer to prevent these intrusions; but that he desired Colonel Harper to be present as a witness to what might pass between him and Mr. Benfield.—Being asked, If it is usual for persons of the conditions and occupations of Mr. Benfield and Comroo to intrude themselves into the presence of the princes of the country, and to treat them with such freedom? he said, Certainly it is not; less there than in any other country.—Being asked, Whether the king of Tanjore has no ministers to whom application might be made to transact such

business as Mr. Benfield and Comroo had to do in the country? he said, Undoubtedly; his minister is the person whose province it is to transact that business.—Being asked, Before the invasion of the British troops into Tanjore, what would have been the consequence, if Mr. Benfield had intruded himself into the rajah's presence, and behaved in that manner? he said, He could not say what would have been the consequence; but the attempt would have been madness, and could not have happened.—Being asked, Whether the rajah had not particular exceptions to Comroo, and thought he had betrayed him in very essential points? he said, Yes, he had.—Being asked, Whether the rajah has not been apprized that the company have made stipulations, that their servants should not interfere in the concerns of his government? he said, He signified it to the rajah, that it was the company's positive orders, and that any of their servants so interfering would incur their highest displeasure.

APPENDIX, No. 8.

Referred to from p. 407, &c.

Commissioners amended clauses for the Fort St. George dispatch, relative to the indeterminate rights and pretensions of the nabob of Arcot, and rajah of Tanjore.

In our letter of the 28th January last, we stated the reasonableness of our expectation that certain contributions towards the expenses of the war, should be made by the rajah of Tanjore. Since writing that letter, we have received one from the rajah, of the 15th of October last, which contains at length his representations of his inability to make such further payment. We think it unnecessary here to discuss whether these representations are or are not exaggerated, because, from the explanations we have given of our wishes for a new arrangement in future, both with the nabob of Arcot, and the rajah of Tanjore, and the directions we have given you to carry that arrangement into execution, we think it impolitic to insist upon any demands upon the rajah for the expenses of the late war, beyond the sum of four lacs of pagodas annually; such a demand might tend to interrupt the harmony which should prevail between the company and the rajah, and impede the great objects of the general system we have already so fully explained to you.

But although it is not our opinion that any further claim should be made on the rajah, for his share of the extraordinary expenses of the late war, it is by no means our intention in any manner to affect the just claim which the nabob has on the rajah for the arrears due to him on account of peshcush, for the regular payment of which we became guarantee by the treaty of 1762; but we have already expressed to you our hopes that the nabob may be induced to allow these arrears and the growing payments, when due, to be received by the company, and carried in discharge of his debt to us. You are at the same time to use every means to convince him, that when this debt shall be discharged, it is our intention, as we are bound by the above treaty, to exert ourselves to the utmost of our power to insure the constant and regular payment of it into his own hands.

We observe, by the plan sent to us by our governour of Fort St. George, on the 30th October, 1781, that an arrangement is there proposed, for the receipt of those arrears from the rajah, in three years.

We are unable to decide how far this proposal may be consistent with the present state of the rajah's resources; but we direct you to use all proper means to bring these arrears to account as soon as possible, consistently with a due attention to this consideration.

Clause H.

You will observe, that by the 38th section of the late act of parliament, it is enacted, that for settling upon a permanent foundation the present indeterminate rights of the nabob of Arcot and the rajah of Tanjore, with respect to each other, we should take into our immediate consideration the said indeterminate rights and pretensions, and take and pursue such measures as in our judgment and discretion shall be best calculated to ascertain and settle the same according to the principles, and the terms and stipulations contained in the treaty of 1762, between the said nabob and the said rajah.

On a retrospect of the proceedings transmitted to us from your presidency, on the subject of the disputes which have heretofore arisen between the nabob and the rajah, we find the following points remain unadjusted, viz.

1st. Whether the jaghire of Arnee shall be enjoyed by the nabob, or delivered up either to the rajah, or the descendants of Tremaul Row, the late jaghiredar.

2d. Whether the fort and district of Hanamantagoody, which is admitted by both parties

to be within the Marawar, ought to be possessed by the nabob, or to be delivered up by him to the rajah.

3d. To whom the government share of the crop of the Tanjore country, of the year 1775–6, properly belongs.

Lastly, Whether the rajah has a right, by usage and custom, or ought, from the necessity of the case, to be permitted to repair such part of the Anicut, or dam and banks of the Cavery, as lie within the district of Trichinopoly, and to take earth and sand in the Trichinopoly territory, for the repairs of the dam and banks within either or both of those districts.

In order to obtain a complete knowledge of the facts and circumstances relative to the several points in dispute, and how far they are connected with the treaty of 1762, we have with great circumspection examined into all the materials before us on these subjects, and will proceed to state to you the result of our inquiries and deliberations.

The objects of the treaty of 1762, appear to be restricted to the arrears of tribute to be paid to the nabob for his past claims, and to the quantum of the rajah's future tribute or peshcush; the cancelling of a certain bond given by the rajah's father to the father of the nabob; the confirmation to the rajah of the districts of Coveladdy and Elangaud, and the restoration of Tremaul Row to his jaghire of Arnee, in condescension to the rajah's request, upon certain stipulations, viz. That the fort of Arnee and Doby Gudy should be retained by the nabob; that Tremaul Row should not erect any fortress, walled pagoda, or other strong hold, nor any wall round his dwelling-house, exceeding eight feet high, or two feet thick; and should in all things behave himself with due obedience to the government; and that he should pay yearly, in the month of July, unto the nabob or his successors, the sum of ten thousand rupees, the rajah thereby becoming the security for Tremaul Row, that he should in all things demean and behave himself accordingly, and pay yearly the stipulated sum.

Upon a review of this treaty, the only point now in dispute, which appears to us to be so immediately connected with it, as to bring it within the strict line of our duty to ascertain and settle, according to the terms and stipulations of the treaty, is that respecting Arnee. For although the other points enumerated may in some respects have a relation to that treaty, yet as they are foreign to the purposes expressed in it, and could not be in the contemplation of the contracting parties at the time of making it, those disputes cannot in our comprehension fall within the line of description of rights and pretensions to be now ascertained and settled by us, according to any of the terms and stipulations of it.

In respect to the jaghire of Arnee, we do not find that our records afford us any satisfactory information by what title the rajah claims it, or what degree of relationship or connection has subsisted between the rajah and the killidar of Arnee, save only that by the treaty of 1762 the former became the surety for Tremaul Row's performance of his engagements specified therein, as the conditions for his restoration to that jaghire; on the death of Tremaul Row we perceive that he was succeeded by his widow, and after her death, by his grandson Seneewasarow, both of whom were admitted to the jaghire by the nabob.

From your minutes of consultation of the 31st October, 1770, and the nabob's letter to the president, of the 21st March, 1771, and the two letters from rajah Beerbur, Atchenur Punt (who, we presume, was then the nabob's manager at Arcot) of the 16th and 18th March, referred to in the nabob's letter, and transmitted therewith to the president, we observe that, previous to the treaty of 1762, Mr. Pigot concurred in the expediency of the nabob's taking possession of this jaghire, on account of the troublesome and refractory behaviour of the Arnee braminees, by their affording protection to all disturbers; who, by reason of the little distance between Arnee and Arcot, fled to the former, and were there protected, and not given up, though demanded.

That though the jaghire was restored in 1762, it was done under such conditions and restrictions as were thought best calculated to preserve the peace and good order of the place, and due obedience to the government.

That nevertheless the braminees (quarrelling among themselves) did afterwards, in express violation of the treaty, enlist and assemble many thousand seapoys, and other troops; that they erected gaddies, and other small forts, provided themselves with wall pieces, small guns, and other warlike stores, and raised troubles and disturbances in the neighbourhood of the city of Arcot, and the forts of Arnee, and Shaw Gaddy; and that finally they imprisoned the hircarrahs of the nabob, sent with his letters and instructions, in pursuance of the advice of your board, to require certain of the braminees to repair to the nabob at Chepauk, and though peremptorily required to repair thither, paid no regard to those, or to any other orders from the circar.

By the 13th article contained in the instructions given by the nabob to Mr. Dupré, as the basis for negotiating the treaty made with the rajah in 1771, the nabob required that the Arnee district should be delivered up to the circar, because the braminees had broken the conditions which they were to have observed. In the answers given by the rajah to these propositions, he says, "I am to give up to the circar the jaghire district of Arnee;" and on the 7th of November, 1771, the rajah, by letter to Seneewasarow, who appears by your consultations and country correspondence to have been the grandson of Tremaul Row, and to have been put in possession of the jaghire at your recommendation (on the death of his grandmother) writes, acquainting him, that he had given the Arnee country then in his (Seneewasarow's) possession, to the nabob, to whose aumildars Seneewasarow was to deliver up the possession of the country. And in your letter to us of the 28th February, 1772, you certified the district of Arnee to be one of the countries acquired by this treaty, and to be of the estimated value of two lacs of rupees per annum.

In our orders, dated the 12th April, 1775, we declared our determination to replace the rajah upon the throne of his ancestors, upon certain terms and conditions, to be agreed upon for the mutual benefit of himself and the company, without infringing the rights of the nabob. We declared, that our faith stood pledged by the treaty of 1762, to obtain payment of the rajah's tribute to the nabob; and that for the ensuring such payment the fort of Tanjore should be garrisoned by our troops. We directed that you should pay no regard to the article of the treaty of 1771, which respected the alienation of part of the rajah's dominions; and we declared, that if the nabob had not a just title to those territories before the conclusion of the treaty, we denied that he obtained any right thereby, except such temporary sovereignty, for securing the payment of his expenses, as is therein mentioned.

These instructions appear to have been executed in the month of April, 1766; and by your letter of the 14th May following, you certified to us, that the rajah had been put into the possession of the whole country his father held in 1762, when the treaty was concluded with the nabob; but we do not find that you came to any resolution either antecedent or subsequent to this advice, either for questioning or impeaching the right of the nabob to the sovereignty of Arnee, or expressive of any doubt of his title to it. Nevertheless we find, that although the board passed no such resolution, yet your president, in his letter to the nabob, of the 30th July, and 24th August, called upon his highness to give up the possession of Arnee to the rajah; and the rajah himself, in several letters to us, particularly in those of 21st October, 1776, and the 7th of June, 1777, expressed his expectation of our orders for delivering up that fort and district to him; and so recently as the 15th of October, 1783, he reminds us of his former application, and states, that the country of Arnee being guaranteed to him by the company, it of course is his right; but that it has not been given up to him, and he therefore earnestly entreats our orders for putting him into the possession of it. We also observe by your letter of the 14th of October, 1779, that the rajah had not then accounted for the nabob's peshcush since his restoration, but had assigned as a reason for his withdrawing it, that the nabob had retained from him the district of Arnee, with a certain other district (Hanamantagoody) which is made the subject of another part of our present dispatches.

We have thus stated to you the result of our inquiry into the grounds of the dispute relative to Arnee; and as the research has offered no evidence in support of the rajah's claim, nor even any lights whereby we can discover in what degree of relationship, by consanguinity, cast, or other circumstances, the rajah now stands, or formerly stood, with the killidar of Arnee, or the nature of his connection with, or command over, that district, or the authority he exercised or assumed previous to the treaty of 1771, we should think ourselves highly reprehensible in complying with the rajah's request; and the more so, as it is expressly stated, in the treaty of 1762, that this fort and district were then in the possession of the nabob, as well as the person of the jaghiredar, on account of his disobedience, and were restored him by the nabob, in condescension to the rajah's request, upon such terms and stipulations as could not, in our judgment, have been imposed by the one, or submitted to by the other, if the sovereignty of the one, or the dependency of the other, had been at that time a matter of doubt.

Although these materials have not furnished us with evidence in support of the rajah's claim, they are far from satisfactory, to evince the justice of, or the political necessity for, the nabob's continuing to withhold the jaghire from the descendants of Tremaul Row; his hereditary right to that jaghire seems to us to have been fully recognized by the stipulations

of the treaty of 1762, and so little doubted, that on his death, his widow was admitted by the nabob to hold it, on account, as may be presumed, of the nonage of his grandson and heir, Seneewassarow, who appears to have been confirmed in the jaghire, on her death, by the nabob, as the lineal heir and successor to his grandfather.

With respect to Seneewassarow, it does not appear, by any of the proceedings in our possession, that he was concerned in the misconduct of the bramineeo, complained of by the nabob in the year 1770, which rendered it necessary for his highness to take the jaghire into his own hands, or that he was privy to, or could have prevented those disturbances.

We therefore direct, that if the heir of Tremaul Row is not at present in possession of the jaghire, and has not, by any violation of the treaty, or act of disobedience, incurred a forfeiture thereof, he be forthwith restored to the possession of it, according to the terms and stipulations of the treaty of 1762. But if any powerful motive of regard to the peace and tranquillity of the Carnatic shall in your judgment render it expedient to suspend the execution of these orders, in that case you are with all convenient speed to transmit to us your proceedings thereupon, with the full state of the facts, and of the reasons which have actuated your conduct.

We have before given it as our opinion that the stipulations of the treaty of 1762 do not apply to the points remaining to be decided. But the late act of parliament having, from the nature of our connection with the two powers of the Carnatic, pointed out the expediency, and even necessity, of settling the several matters in dispute between them, by a speedy and permanent arrangement, we now proceed to give you our instructions upon the several other heads of disputes before enumerated.

With respect to the fort and district of Hanamantagoody, we observe that on the restoration of the rajah in 1776, you informed us in your letter of the 14th of May—"That the rajah had been put into possession of the whole of the country his father held in 1762 when the treaty was concluded with the nabob;" and on the 25th of June you came to the resolution of putting the rajah into possession of Hanamantagoody, on the ground of its appearing on reference to the nabob's instructions to Mr. Dupré in June 1762, to his reply, and to the rajah's representations of 25th March, 1771; that Hanamantagoody was actually in the hands of the late rajah at the time of making the treaty of 1762. We have referred as well to those papers as to all the other proceedings on this subject, and must confess they fall very short of demonstrating to us the truth of that fact. And we find, by the secret consultations of Fort William, of the 7th of August, 1776, that the same doubt was entertained by our governour general and council.

But whether, in point of fact, the late rajah was or was not in possession of Hanamantagoody, in 1762, it is notorious that the nabob had always claimed the dominion of the countries of which this fort and district are a part.

We observe, that the nabob is now in the actual possession of this fort and district; and we are not warranted, by any document we have seen, to concur with the wishes of the rajah to dispossess him.

With regard to the government share of the crop of 1775-6, we observe by the dobeer's memorandum, recited in your consultations of the 13th of May, 1776, that it was the established custom of the Tanjore country to gather in the harvest, and complete the collections within the month of March; but that, for the causes therein particularly stated, the harvest (and of course the collection of the government share of the crop) was delayed till the month of March was over. We also observe, that the rajah was not restored to his kingdom until the 11th of April, 1776; and from hence we infer, that if the harvest and collection had been finished at the usual time, the nabob (being then the sovereign of the country) would have received the full benefit of that year's crop.

Although the harvest and collection were delayed beyond the usual time, yet we find by the proceedings of your government, and particularly by Mr. Mackay's minute of the 29th of May, 1776, and also by the dobeer's account, that the greatest part of the grain was cut down whilst the nabob remained in the government of the country.

It is difficult, from the contradictory allegations on the subject, to ascertain what was the precise amount of the collections made after the nabob ceased to have the possession of the country. But whatever it was, it appears from General Stuart's letter of the 2d of April, 1777, that it had been asserted with good authority, that the far greater part of the government share of the crop was plundered by individuals, and never came to account in the rajah's treasury.

Under all the circumstances of this case, we must be of opinion, that the government share of the crop of 1776 belonged to the nabob, a

the then reigning sovereign of the kingdom of Tanjore, he being *de facto*, in the full and absolute possession of the government thereof, and consequently that the assignments made by him of the government share of the crop were valid.

Nevertheless, we would by no means be understood by this opinion to suggest, that any further demands ought to be made upon the rajah, in respect of such part of the government share of the crop as were collected by his people.

For, on the contrary, after so great a length of time as hath elapsed, we should think it highly unjust that the rajah should be now compelled, either to pay the supposed balances, whatever they may be, or be called upon to render a specific account of the collection made by his people.

The rajah has already, in his letter to Governour Stratton, of the 21st of April, 1777, given his assurance, that the produce of the preceding year, accounted for to him, was little more than one lac of pagodas; and as you have acquainted us, by your letter of the 14th of October, 1779, that the rajah has actually paid into our treasury one lac of pagodas, by way of deposit, on account of the nabob's claims to the crop, till our sentiments should be known, we direct you to surcease any further demands from the rajah on that account.

We learn by the proceedings, and particularly by the nabob's letter to Lord Pigot, of the 6th of July, 1776, that the nabob, previous to the restoration of the rajah, actually made assignments, or granted tuncaws of the whole of his share of the crop to his creditors and troops; and that your government (entertaining the same opinion as we do upon the question of right to that share) by letter to the rajah of the 20th of August, 1776, recommended to him "to restore to Mr. Benfield (one of the principal assignees or tuncaw-holders of the nabob) the grain of the last year, which was in the possession of his people, and said to be forcibly taken from them; and further, to give Mr. Benfield all reasonable assistance in recovering such debts as should appear to have been justly due to him from the inhabitants; and acquainted the rajah, that it had been judged by a majority of the council, that it was the company's intention to let the nabob have the produce of the crop of 1776, but that you had no intention that the rajah should be accountable for more than the government share, whatever that might be; and that you did not mean to do more than recommend to him to see justice done, leaving the manner and time to himself." Subsequent representations appear to have been made to the rajah by your government on the same subject, in favour of the nabob's mortgages.

In answer to these applications, the rajah, in his letter to Mr. Stratton, of the 12th January, 1777, acquainted you, "that he had given orders respecting the grain which Mr. Benfield had heaped up in his country; and with regard to the money due to him by the farmers, that he had desired Mr. Benfield to bring accounts of it, that he might limit a time for the payment of it, proportionably to their ability, and that the necessary orders for stopping this money out of the inhabitants' share of the crop, had been sent to the ryots and sumildars; that Mr. Benfield's gomastah was then present there, and oversaw his affairs; and that in every thing that was just he (the rajah) willingly obeyed our governour and council."

Our opinion being, that the rajah ought to be answerable for no more than the amount of what he admits was collected by his people for the government share of the crop; and the proceedings before us not sufficiently explaining whether, in the sum which the rajah, by his before-mentioned letter of the 21st April, 1777, admits to have collected, are included those parts of the government share of the crop which were taken by his people from Mr. Benfield, or from any other of the assignees, or tuncaw-holders; and uninformed as we also are, what compensation the rajah has or has not made to Mr. Benfield, or any other of the parties from whom the grain was taken by the rajah's people; or whether, by means of the rajah's refusal so to do, or from any other circumstance, any of the persons dispossessed of their grain, may have had recourse to the nabob for satisfaction; we are, for these reasons, incompetent to form a proper judgment what disposition ought in justice to be made of the one lac of pagodas deposited by the rajah. But as our sentiments and intentions are so fully expressed upon the whole subject, we presume you, who are upon the spot, can have no doubt or difficulty in making such an application of the deposit as will be consistent with those principles of justice whereon our sentiments are founded. But should any such difficulty suggest itself, you will suspend any application of the deposit, until you have fully explained the same to us, and have received our further orders.

With respect to the repairs of the Anicut and banks of the Cavery, we have upon various occasions fully expressed to you our senti-

ments, and in particular, in our general letter of the 4th July, 1777, we referred you to the investigation and correspondence on that subject of the year 1764, and to the report made by Mr. James Bourchier, on his personal survey of the waters, and to several letters of the year 1765 and 1767; we also, by our said general letter, acquainted you, that it appeared to us perfectly reasonable that the rajah should be permitted to repair those banks, and the Anicut, in the same manner as had been practised in times past; and we directed you to establish such regulations, by reference to former usage, for keeping the said banks in repair, as would be effectual, and remove all cause of complaint in future.

Notwithstanding such our instructions, the rajah, in his letter to us of the 15th October, 1783, complains of the destruction of the anicut; and as the cultivation of the Tanjore country appears, by all the surveys and reports of our engineers employed on that service, to depend altogether on a supply of water by the Cavery which can only be secured by keeping the Anicut and banks in repair, we think it necessary to repeat to you our orders of the 4th July, 1777, on the subject of those repairs.

And further, as it appears, by the survey and report of Mr. Pringle, that these repairs are attended with a much heavier expense when done with materials taken from the Tanjore district, than with those of Trichinopoly, and that the last mentioned materials are far preferable to the other, it is our order, that if any occurrences should make it necessary or expedient, you apply to the nabob in our name, to desire that his highness will permit proper spots of ground to be set out, and bounded by proper marks on the Trichinopoly side, where the rajah and his people may at all times take sand and earth sufficient for these repairs; and that his highness will grant his lease of such spots of land for a certain term of years to the company, at a reasonable annual rent, to the intent that through you the cultivation of the Tanjore country may be secured, without infringing or impairing the rights of the nabob.

If any attempts have been, or shall be hereafter made to divert the water from the Cavery into the Coleroon, by contracting the current of the Upper or Lower Cavery, by planting long grass, as mentioned in Mr. Pringle's report, or by any other means, we have no doubt his highness, on a proper representation to him in our name, will prevent his people from taking any measures detrimental to the Tanjore country, in the prosperity of which his highness, as well as the company, is materially interested.

Should you succeed in reconciling the nabob to this measure, we think it but just, that the proposed lease shall remain no longer in force than whilst the rajah shall be punctual in the payment of the annual peshcush to the nabob, as well as the rent to be reserved for the spots of ground. And in order effectually to remove all future occasions of jealousy and complaint between the parties, that the rajah on the one hand may be satisfied that all necessary works for the cultivation of his country will be made and kept in repair; and that the nabob on the other hand may be satisfied that no encroachment on his rights can be made, nor any works detrimental to the fertility of his country erected; we think it proper that it should be recommended to the parties, as a part of the adjustment of this very important point, that skilful engineers, appointed by the company, be employed at the rajah's expense to conduct all the necessary works, with the strictest attention to the respective rights and interests of both parties. This will remove every probability of injury or dispute; but should either party unexpectedly conceive themselves to be injured, immediate redress might be obtained by application to the government of Madras, under whose appointment the engineer will act, without any discussion between the parties, which might disturb that harmony which it is so much the wish of the company to establish and preserve, as essential to the prosperity and peace of the Carnatic.

Having now, in obedience to the directions of the act of parliament, upon the fullest consideration of the indeterminate rights and pretensions of the nabob and rajah, pointed out such measures and arrangements as in our judgment and discretion will be best calculated to ascertain and settle the same, we hope, that upon a candid consideration of the whole system, although each of the parties may feel disappointed in our decision on particular points, they will be convinced that we have been guided in our investigation by principles of strict justice and impartiality, and that the most anxious attention has been paid to the substantial interests of both parties, and such a general comprehensive plan of arrangement proposed, as will most effectually prevent all future dissatisfaction.

Approved by the board.

Whitehall, *October* 27, 1784.

HENRY DUNDAS,
WALSINGHAM,
W. W. GRENVILLE,
MULGRAVE.

APPENDIX, No. 9.

Referred to from p. 404, and 406.

Extract of a letter from the Court of Directors, to the President and Council of Fort St. George, as amended and approved by the Board of Controul.

We have taken into our consideration the several advices and papers received from India, relative to the assignment of the revenues of the Carnatic, from the conclusion of the Bengal treaty to the date of your letter in October 1783, together with the representations of the nabob of the Carnatic upon that subject; and although we might contend, that the agreement should subsist till we are fully reimbursed his highness's proportion of the expenses of the war, yet from a principle of moderation and personal attachment to our old ally, his highness the nabob of the Carnatic, for whose dignity and happiness we are ever solicitous, and to cement more strongly, if possible, that mutual harmony and confidence which our connection makes so essentially necessary for our reciprocal safety and welfare, *and for removing from his mind every idea of secret design on our part to lessen his authority over the internal government of the Carnatic*, and the collection and administration of its revenues, we have resolved that the assignment shall be surrendered; and we do accordingly direct our president, in whose name the assignment was taken, *without delay*, to surrender the same to his highness. But while we have adopted this resolution, we repose entire confidence in his highness, that, actuated by the same motives of liberality, and feelings of old friendship and alliance, he will cheerfully and instantly accede to such arrangements as are necessary to be adopted for our common safety, and for preserving the respect, rights, and interests we enjoy in the Carnatic. The following are the heads and principles of such an arrangement as we are decisively of opinion must be adopted for these purposes, viz.

That for making a provision for discharging the nabob's just debts to the company and individuals (for the payment of which his highness has so frequently expressed the greatest solicitude) the *nabob shall give soucar security for the punctual payment, by instalments*, into the company's treasury, of twelve lacs of pagodas per annum (as voluntarily proposed by his highness) until those debts, with interest, shall be discharged; and shall also consent that the equitable provision lately made by the British legislature for the liquidation of those debts, *and such resolutions and determinations* as we shall *hereafter make*, under the authority of that provision for the liquidation and adjustment of the said debts, *bonâ fide* incurred, shall be carried into full force and effect.

Should any difficulty arise between his highness and our government of Fort St. George, in respect to the *responsibility of the soucar security*, or the times and terms of the instalments, it is our pleasure that you pay obedience to the orders and resolutions of our governour general and council of Bengal in respect thereto, not doubting but the nabob will in such case consent to abide by the determination of our said supreme government.

Although, from the great confidence we repose in the honour and integrity of the nabob, and from an earnest desire not to subject him to any embarrassment on this occasion, we have not proposed any specific assignment of territory or revenue for securing the payments aforesaid, we nevertheless think it our duty, as well to the private creditors, whose interests in this respect have been so solemnly intrusted to us by the late act of parliament, as from regard to the debt due to the company, to insist on a declaration, that in the event of the failure of the security proposed, or in default of payment at the stipulated periods, we reserve to ourselves full right to demand of the nabob such *additional security*, by assignment on his country, as shall be effectual for answering the purposes of the agreement.

After having conciliated the mind of the nabob to this measure, and adjusted the particulars, you are to carry the same into execution by a formal deed between his highness and the company, according to the tenour of these instructions.

As the administration of the British interests and connections in India has in some respects assumed a new shape by the late act of parliament, and a general peace in India has been happily accomplished, the present appears to us to be the proper period, and which cannot without great imprudence be omitted, to settle and arrange, by a just and equitable treaty, a plan for the future defence and protection of the Carnatic, both in time of peace and war, on a solid and lasting foundation.

For the accomplishment of this great and necessary object, we direct you, in the name of the company, to use your utmost endeavours to impress the expediency of, and the good effects to be derived from, this measure, so strongly upon the minds of the nabob and the rajah of Tanjore, as to prevail upon them,

jointly or separately, to enter into one or more treaty or treaties with the company, grounded on this principle of equity, That all the contracting parties shall be bound to contribute jointly to the support of the military force and garrisons, as well in peace as in war.

That the military peace establishment shall be forthwith settled and adjusted by the company, in pursuance of the authority and directions given to them by the late act of parliament.

As the payment of the troops and garrisons, occasional expenses in the repairs and improvements of fortifications, and other services incidental to a military establishment, must of necessity be punctual and accurate, no latitude of personal assurance or reciprocal confidence of either of the parties on the other, must be accepted or required; but the nabob and rajah must of necessity specify particular districts and revenues for securing the due and regular payment of their contributions into the treasury of the company, with whom the charge of the defence of the coast, and of course the power of the sword, must be exclusively intrusted, with power for the company, in case of failure or default of such payments, at the stipulated times and seasons, to enter upon and possess such districts, and to let the same to renters, to be confirmed by the nabob and the rajah respectively; but trusting that in the execution of this part of the arrangement no undue obstruction will be given by either of those powers, we direct, that this part of the treaty be coupled with a most positive assurance, on our part, of our determination to support the dignity and authority of the nabob and rajah, in the exclusive administration of the civil government and revenues of their respective countries; and further, that in case of *any* hostility committed against the territories of either of the contracting parties, on the coast of Coromandel, the whole revenues of their respective territories shall be considered as one common stock, to be appropriated in the common cause of their defence—That the company on their part shall engage to refrain, *during the war*, from the application of any part of their revenues to any commercial purposes whatsoever, but apply the whole, save only the ordinary charges of their civil government, to the purposes of the war—That the nabob and the rajah shall in like manner engage on their parts to refrain, during the war, from the application of any part of their revenues, save only what shall be actually necessary for the support of themselves, and the civil government of their respective countries, to any other purposes than that of defraying the expenses of such military operations as the company may find it necessary to carry on for the common safety of their interests on the coast of Coromandel.

And to obviate any difficulties or misunderstanding which might arise from leaving indeterminate the sum necessary to be appropriated for the civil establishment of each of the respective powers, that the sum be now ascertained which is indispensably necessary to be applied to those purposes, and which is to be held sacred under every emergency, and set apart previous to the application of the rest of the revenues, as hereby stipulated, for the purposes of mutual or common defence against any enemy, for *clearing* the incumbrance which may have become necessarily incurred in addition to the expenditure of those revenues *which must be always deemed part of the war establishment*. This we think absolutely necessary, as nothing can tend so much to the preservation of peace, and to prevent the renewal of hostilities, as the early putting the finances of the several powers upon a clear footing; and the shewing to all other powers, that the company, the nabob, and the rajah, are firmly united in one common cause, and combined in one system of permanent and vigorous defence, for the preservation of their respective territories, and the general tranquillity.

That the whole aggregate revenue of the contracting parties shall, during the war, be under the application of the company, and shall continue as long after the war *as shall be necessary, to discharge the burthens contracted by it*; but it must be declared, that this provision shall in no respect extend to deprive either the nabob or the rajah of the substantial authority necessary to the collection of the revenues of their respective countries. But it is meant that they shall faithfully perform the conditions of this arrangement; and if a division of any part of the revenues, to any other than the stipulated purposes, shall take place, the company shall be entitled to take upon themselves the collection of the revenue.

The company are to engage, during the time they shall administer the revenues, to produce to the other contracting parties regular accounts of the application thereof to the purposes stipulated by the treaty, and faithfully apply them in support of the war.

And lastly, as the defence of the Carnatic is thus to rest with the company, the nabob shall be satisfied of the propriety of avoiding all unnecessary expense, and will therefore agree not to maintain a greater number of

troops than shall be necessary for the support of his dignity, and the splendour of the durbar, which number shall be specified in the treaty; and if any military aid is requisite for the security and collection of his revenues, other than the fixed establishment employed to enforce the ordinary collections, and preserve the police of the country, the company must be bound to furnish him with such aid: the rajah of Tanjore must likewise become bound by similar engagements, and be entitled to similar aid.

As, in virtue of the powers vested in Lord Macartney, by the agreement of December, 1781, sundry leases, of various periods, have been granted to renters, we direct, that you apply to the nabob, in our name, for his consent, that they may be *permitted* to hold their leases to the end of the stipulated term; and we have great reliance* on the liberality and spirit of accommodation manifested by the nabob on so many occasions, that he will be disposed to acquiesce in a proposition so *just and reasonable;* but if, contrary to our expectations, his highness should be impressed with any particular aversion to comply with this proposition, we do not desire you to insist upon it as an essential part of the arrangement to take place between us; but in that event you must take especial care to give such indemnification to the renters for any loss they may sustain, as you judge to be reasonable.

It equally concerns the honour of our government, that such natives as may have been put in any degree of authority over the collections, in consequence of the deed of assignment, and who have proved faithful to their trust, shall not suffer inconvenience on account of their fidelity.

Having thus given our sentiments at large, as well for the surrender of the assignment, as with regard to those arrangements which we think necessary to adopt in consequence thereof, we cannot dismiss this subject without expressing our highest approbation of the *ability, moderation, and command of temper*, with which our president at Madras has conducted himself in the management of a very delicate and embarrassing situation. His conduct, and that of the select committee of Fort St. George, in the execution of the trust delegated to Lord Macartney, by the nabob Mahomed Ally, has been vigorous and effectual, for the purpose of realizing as great a revenue, at a crisis of necessity, as the nature of the case admitted; and the imputation of corruption, suggested in some of the proceedings, appears to be totally groundless and unwarranted.

While we find so much to applaud, it is with regret we are induced to advert to any thing which may appear worthy of blame, as the step of issuing the Torana Chits in Lord Macartney's own name can only be justified upon the ground of absolute necessity;* and as his lordship had every reason to believe that the demand, when made, would be irksome and disagreeable to the feelings of Mahomed Ally, every precaution ought to have been used, and more time allowed, for proving that necessity, by previous acts of address, civility, and conciliation, applied for the purposes of obtaining his authority to such a measure. It appears to us, that more of this might have been used; and therefore we cannot consider the omission of it as blameless, consistent with our wishes of sanctifying no act contrary to the spirit of the agreement, or derogatory to the authority of the nabob of the Carnatic, in the exercise of any of his just rights, in the government of the people under his authority.

We likewise observe, the nabob has complained that no official communication was made to him of the peace, for near a month after the cessation of arms took place. This, and every other mark of disrespect to the nabob, will ever appear highly reprehensible in our eyes; and we direct that you do, upon all occasions, pay the highest attention to him and his family.

Lord Macartney, in his minute of the 9th of September last, has been fully under our consideration: we shall ever applaud the prudence and foresight of our servants, which induces them to collect and communicate to us, every opinion, or even ground of suspicion, they may entertain, relative to any of the powers in India, with whose conduct our interest, and the safety of our settlements, is es-

* For the ground of this "great reliance," see the papers in this Appendix, No. 5; as also the nabob's letters to the court of directors in this Appendix, No. 10.

* For the full proof of this necessity, Lord Macartney's whole correspondence on the subject may be referred to. Without the act here condemned, not one of the acts commended in the preceding paragraph could be performed. By referring to the nabob's letters in this Appendix it will be seen what sort of task a governour has on his hands, who is to use, according to the direction of this letter, "acts of address, civility, and conciliation, and to pay, upon *all* occasions, the *highest attention*" to persons, who at the very time are falsely, and in the grossest terms, accusing him of peculation, corruption, treason, and every species of malversation in office. The recommendation, under menaces of such behaviour, and under such circumstances, conveys a lesson, the tendency of which cannot be misunderstood.

sentially connected. At the same time we earnestly recommend, that those opinions and speculations be communicated to us with prudence, discretion, and all possible secrecy; *and the terms in which they are conveyed be expressed in a manner as little offensive as possible to the powers whom they may concern, and into whose hands they may fall.*"*

We next proceed to give you our sentiments respecting the private debts of the nabob; *and we cannot but acknowledge*, that the origin and justice, both of the loan of 1767, and the loan of 1777, commonly called the cavalry loan, appear to us clear and indisputable, agreeable to the true sense and spirit of the late act of parliament.

In speaking of the loan of 1767, we are to be understood as speaking of the debt as constituted by the original bonds of that year, bearing interest at ten per cent.; and therefore, if any of the nabob's creditors, under a pretence that their debts made part of the consolidated debt of 1767, although secured by bonds of a subsequent date, carrying an interest exceeding ten per cent. shall claim the benefit of the following orders, we direct that you pay no regard to such claims, without further special instructions for that purpose.

With respect to the consolidated debt of 1777, it certainly stands upon a less favourable footing. So early as the 27th March, 1769, it was ordered by our then president and council of Fort St. George, that for the preventing all persons living under the company's protection from having any dealings with any of the country powers, or their ministers, without the knowledge or consent of the board, an advertisement should be published, by fixing it up at the sea-gate, and sending round a copy to the company's servants and inhabitants, and to the different subordinates, and our garrisons, and giving it out in general orders; stating therein, that the president and council did consider the irreversible order of the court of directors of the year 1714 (whereby their people were prohibited from having any dealings with the country governments in money matters) to be in full force and vigour; and thereby expressly forbidding all servants of the company, and other Europeans under their jurisdiction, to make loans, or have any money transactions with any of the princes or states in India, without special licence and permission of the president and council for the time being, except only in the particular cases there mentioned; and declaring, that any wilful deviation therefrom should be deemed a breach of orders, and treated as such. And on the 4th of March, 1778, it was resolved by our president and council of Fort St. George, that the consolidated debt of 1777 was not, on any respect whatever, conducted under the auspices or protection of that government; and on the circumstance of the consolidation of the said debt being made known to us, we did, on the 23d of December, 1778, write to you in the following terms: "Your account of the nabob's private debts is very alarming; but from whatever cause or causes those debts have been contracted or increased, we hereby repeat our orders, that the sanction of the company be on no account given to any kind of security for the payment or liquidation of any part thereof (except by the express authority of the court of directors) on any account or pretence whatever."

The loan of 1777, therefore, has no sanction or authority from us; and in considering the situation and circumstances of this loan, we cannot omit to observe, that the creditors could not be ignorant how greatly the affairs of the nabob were at that time deranged, and that his debt to the company was then very considerable; the payment of which the parties took the most effectual means to postpone, by procuring an assignment of such specific revenues, for the discharge of their own debts, as alone could have enabled the nabob to have discharged that of the company.

Under all these circumstances, we should be warranted to refuse our aid or protection in the recovery of this loan; but when we consider the inexpediency of keeping the subject of the nabob's debts longer afloat than is absolutely necessary; when we consider how much the final conclusion of this business will tend to promote tranquillity, credit, and circulation of property in the Carnatic; and when we consider that the debtor concurs with the creditor in establishing the justice of those debts consolidated in 1777 into gross sums, for

* The delicacy here recommended in the *expressions* concerning conduct "with which the safety of our settlements is essentially connected," is a lesson of the same nature with the former. Dangerous designs, if truly such, ought to be expressed according to their nature and qualities; and as for the *secrecy* recommended concerning the designs here alluded to, nothing can be more absurd, as they appear very fully and directly in the papers published by the authority of the court of directors in 1776, and may be easily discerned from the propositions for the Bengal treaty, published in the Reports of the Committee of Secrecy, and in the Reports of the Select Committee. The keeping of such secrets too long has been one cause of the Carnatic war, and of the ruin of our affairs in India.

which bonds were given, liable to be transferred to persons different from the original creditors, and having no share or knowledge of the transactions in which the debts originated, and of course how little ground there is to expect any substantial good to result from an unlimited investigation into them, we have resolved so far to recognise the justice of those debts, as to extend to them that protection which, upon *more* forcible grounds, we have seen cause to allow to the other two classes of debts. But, although we so far adopt the general presumption in their favour, as to admit them to a participation in the manner hereafter directed, we do not mean to debar you from receiving any complaints against those debts of 1777, at the instance either of the nabob himself, or of other creditors injured by their being so admitted, or by any other persons having a proper interest, or stating reasonable grounds of objection; and if any complaints are offered, we order that the grounds of all such be attentively examined by you, and be transmitted to us, together with the evidence adduced in support of them, for our final decision; and as we have before directed, that the sum of twelve lacs of pagodas, to be received annually from the nabob, should be paid into our treasury, it is our order that the same be distributed according to the following arrangement.

That the debt be made up in the following manner, viz.

The debt consolidated in 1767 to be made up to the end of the year 1784, with the current interest at ten per cent.

The cavalry loan to be made up to the same period, with the current interest at twelve per cent.

The debt consolidated in 1777 to be made up to the same period, with the current interest at twelve per cent. to November, 1781, and from thence with the current interest at six per cent.

The twelve lacs annually to be received, are then to be applied,

1. To the growing interest on the cavalry loan, at twelve per cent.

2. To the growing interest on the debt of 1777, at six per cent.

The remainder to be equally divided; one half to be applied to the extinction of the company's debt, the other half to be applied to the payment of growing interest at ten per cent. and towards the discharge of the principal of the debt of 1767.

This arrangement to continue till the principal of the debt 1767 is discharged.

The application of the twelve lacs is then to be,

1. To the interest of the debt, 1777, as above. The remainder to be then equally divided; one half towards the discharge of the current interest and principal of the cavalry loan, and the other half towards the discharge of the company's debt.

When the cavalry loan shall be thus discharged, there shall then be paid, towards the discharge of the company's debt, seven lacs.

To the growing interest and capital of the 1777 loan, five lacs.

When the company's debt shall be discharged, the whole is then to be applied in discharge of the debt 1777.

If the nabob shall be prevailed upon to apply the arrears and growing payments of the Tanjore peshcush in further discharge of his debts, over and above the twelve lacs of pagodas, we direct that the whole of that payment, when made, shall be applied towards the reduction of the company's debt.

We have laid down these general rules of distribution, as appearing to us founded on justice, and the relative circumstances of the different debts; and therefore we give our authority and protection to them only on the supposition that they who ask our protection acquiesce in the condition upon which it is given; and therefore we expressly order, that if any creditor of the nabob, a servant of the company, or being under our protection, shall refuse to express his acquiescence in these arrangements, he shall not only be excluded from receiving any share of the fund under your distribution, but shall be prohibited from taking any separate measures to recover his debt from the nabob, it being one great inducement to our adopting this arrangement, that the nabob shall be relieved from all further disquietude by the importunities of his individual creditors, and be left at liberty to pursue those measures for the prosperity of his country, which the embarrassments of his situation have hitherto deprived him of the means of exerting. And we further direct, that if any creditor shall be found refractory, or disposed to disturb the arrangement we have suggested, he shall be dismissed the service, and sent home to England.

The directions we have given only apply to the three classes of debts which have come under our observation. It has been surmised, that the nabob has of late contracted further debts; if any of these are due to British subjects, we forbid any countenance or protection

whatever to be given to them, until the debt is fully investigated, the nature of it reported home, and our special instructions upon it received.

We cannot conclude this subject, without adverting in the strongest terms to the prohibitions which have from time to time issued under the authority of different courts of directors against any of our servants, or of those under our protection, having any money transactions with any of the country powers, without the knowledge and previous consent of our respective governments abroad; we are happy to find that the nabob, sensible of the great embarrassments both to his own and the company's affairs, which the enormous amount of their private claims have occasioned, is willing to engage not to incur any new debts with individuals, and we think little difficulty will be found in persuading his highness into a positive stipulation for that purpose; and though the legislature has thus humanely interfered in behalf of such individuals as might otherwise have been reduced to great distress by the past transactions, we hereby, in the most pointed and positive terms, repeat our prohibition upon this subject; and direct that no person, being a servant of the company, or being under our protection, shall, on any pretence whatever, be concerned in any loan or other money transaction with any of the country powers, unless with the knowledge and express permission of our respective governments. And if any of our servants, or others being under our protection, shall be discovered in any respect counteracting these orders, we strictly enjoin you to take the first opportunity of sending them home to England, to be punished as guilty of disobedience of orders, and no protection or assistance of the company shall be given for the recovery of any loans connected with such transactions. Your particular attention to this subject is strictly enjoined; and any connivance on your parts, to a breach of our orders upon it, will incur our highest displeasure.

In order to put an end to those intrigues, which have been so successfully carried on at the nabob's durbar, we repeat our prohibition in the strongest terms repecting any intercourse between British subjects and the nabob and his family, as we are convinced that such an intercourse has been carried on greatly to the detriment and expense of the nabob, and merely to the advantage of individuals. We therefore direct, that all persons who shall offend against the letter and spirit of this necessary order, whether in the company's service, or under their protection, be forthwith sent to England.

Approved by the Board.

Whitehall, 15*th Oct.* 1784.

HENRY DUNDAS,
WALSINGHAM,
W. W. GRENVILLE
MULGRAVE.

Extract from the Representation of the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

It is with extreme concern that we express a difference of opinion with your right honourable board, in this early exercise of your controuling power; but in so novel an institution, it can scarce be thought extraordinary, if the exact boundaries of our respective functions and duties should not at once, on either side, be precisely and familiarly understood, and therefore confide in your justice and candour for believing that we have no wish to evade or frustrate the salutary purposes of your institution, as we on our part are thoroughly satisfied that you have no wish to encroach on the legal powers of the East India company: we shall proceed to state our objections to such of the amendments as appear to us to be either insufficient, inexpedient, or unwarranted.

6th. Concerning the private Debts of the Nabob of Arcot, and the Application of the Fund of twelve lacs of Pagodas per Annum.

Under this head you are pleased, in lieu of our paragraphs, to substantiate at once the justice of all those demands which the act requires us to investigate, subject only to a right reserved to the nabob, or any other party concerned, to question the justice of any debt falling within the last of the three classes; we submit, that at least the opportunity of questioning, within the limited time, the justice of any of the debts, ought to have been fully preserved; and supposing the first and second classes to stand free from imputation (as we incline to believe they do) no injury can result to individuals from such discussion: and we further submit to your consideration, how far the express direction of the act to examine the nature and origin of the debts has been, by the amended paragraphs, complied with; and whether at least the rate of interest, according to which the debts arising from soucar assignment of the land revenues to the servants of the company, acting in the capacity of native

bankers, have been accumulated, ought not to be inquired into, as well as the reasonableness of the deduction of 25 per cent. which the Bengal government directed to be made from a great part of the debts on certain conditions. But to your appropriation of the fund, our duty requires that we should state our strongest dissent. Our right to be paid the arrears of those expenses, by which, almost to our own ruin, we have preserved the country, and all the property connected with it, from falling a prey to a foreign conquerour, surely stands paramount to all claims for former debts upon the revenues of a country so preserved, even if the legislature had not expressly limited the assistance to be given the private creditors to be such as should be consistent with our own rights. The nabob had, long before passing the act, by treaty with our Bengal government, agreed to pay us seven lacs of pagodas, as part of the twelve lacs, in liquidation of those arrears, of which seven lacs the arrangement you have been pleased to lay down would take away from us more than the half, and give it to private creditors, of whose demands there are only about a sixth part which do not stand in a predicament that you declare would not entitle them to any aid or protection from us in the recovery thereof, were it not upon grounds of expediency, as will more particularly appear by the annexed estimate. Until our debts shall be discharged, we can by no means consent to give up any part of the seven lacs to the private creditors; and we humbly apprehend, that in this declaration we do not exceed the limits of the authority and rights vested in us.

The Right honourable the Commissioners for the Affairs of India.

The REPRESENTATION of the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

THE court having duly attended to your reasonings and decisions, on the subjects of Arnee and Hanamantagoody, beg leave to observe, with due deference to your judgment, that the directions we had given in these paragraphs, which did not obtain your approbation, still appear to us to have been consistent with justice, and agreeable to the late act of parliament, which pointed out to us, as we apprehended, the treaty of 1762 as our guide. Signed by order of the said court,

THO. MORTON, Sec.

East India House, 3d Nov. 1784.

Extract of a Letter from the Commissioners for the Affairs of India, to the Court of Directors, dated 3d November, 1784, in Answer to their Remonstrance.

Sixth Article.

WE think it proper, considering the particular nature of the subject, to state to you the following remarks on that part of your representation which relates to the plan for the discharging of the nabob's debts.

1st. You compute the revenue which the Carnatic may be expected to produce only at twenty lacs of pagodas. If we concurred with you in this opinion, we should certainly feel our hopes of advantage to all the parties from this arrangement considerably diminished. But we trust, that we are not too sanguine on this head, when we place the greatest reliance on the estimate transmitted to you by your president of Fort St. George, having there the best means of information upon the fact, and stating it with a particular view to the subject matter of these paragraphs. Some allowance, we are sensible, must be made for the difference of collection in the nabob's hands, but we trust not such as to reduce the receipt nearly to what you suppose.

2dly. In making up the amount of the private debts, you take in compound interest at the different rates specified in our paragraph. This it was not our intention to allow; and lest any misconception should arise on the spot, we have added an express direction, that the debts be made up with simple interest only, from the time of their repective consolidation. Clause F f.

3dly. We have also the strongest grounds to believe, that the debts will be, in other respects, considerably less than they are now computed by you; and consequently, the company's annual proportion of the twelve lacs will be larger than it appears on your estimate. But even on your own statement of it, if we add to the £.150,000 or 3,75,000 pagodas (which you take as the annual proportion to be received by the company for five years to the end of 1789) the annual amount of the Tanjore peshcush for the same period, and the arrears on the peshcush, (proposed by Lord Macartney to be received in three years;) the whole will make a sum not falling very short of pagodas 35,00,000, the amount of pagodas 7,00,000 *per annum* for the same period. And if we carry our calculations farther, it will appear that, both by the plan proposed by the nabob, and adopted in your paragraphs, and by that which we transmitted to you, the debt from the nabob, if taken at £.3,000,000 will be dis-

charged nearly at the same period, viz. in the course of the eleventh year. We cannot therefore be of opinion that there is the smallest ground for objecting to this arrangement, as injurious to the interests of the company, even if the measure were to be considered on the mere ground of expediency, and with a view only to the wisdom of re-establishing credit and circulation in a commercial settlement, without any consideration of those motives of attention to the feelings and honour of the nabob, of humanity to individuals, and of justice to persons in your service, and living under your protection, which have actuated the legislature, and which afford not only justifiable, but commendable grounds for your conduct.

Impressed with this conviction, we have not made any alteration in the general outlines of the arrangement which we had before transmitted to you. But, as the amount of the nabob's revenue is matter of uncertain conjecture, and as it does not appear just to us, that any deficiency should fall wholly on any one class of these debts, we have added a direction to your government of Fort St. George, that if, notwithstanding the provisions contained in our former paragraphs, any deficiency should arise, the payments of what shall be received shall be made in the same proportion which would have obtained in the division of the whole twelve lacs, had they been paid.

APPENDIX, No. 10.

Referred to from p. 412.

[THE following extracts are subjoined, to shew the matter and the style of representation employed by those who have obtained that ascendency over the nabob of Arcot, which is described in the letter marked No. 6 of the present Appendix, and which is so totally destructive of the authority and credit of the lawful British government at Madras. The charges made by these persons have been solemnly denied by Lord Macartney; and, to judge from the character of the parties accused and accusing, they are probably void of all foundation. But as the letters are in the name and under the signature of a person of great rank and consequence among the natives; as they contain matter of the most serious nature; as they charge the most enormous crimes, and corruptions of the grossest kind, on a British governour; and as they refer to the nabob's minister in Great Britain for proof and further elucidation of matters complained of, common decency, and common policy, demanded an inquiry into their truth or falsehood. The writing is obviously the product of some English pen. If, on inquiry, these charges should be made good (a thing very unlikely) the party accused would become a just object of animadversion. If they should be found (as in all probability they would be found) false and calumnious, and supported by *forgery*, then the censure would fall on the accuser; at the same time the necessity would be manifest for proper measures towards the security of government against such infamous accusations. It is as necessary to protect the honest fame of virtuous governours, as it is to punish the corrupt and tyrannical. But neither the court of directors nor the board of controul have made any inquiry into the truth or falsehood of these charges. They have covered over the accusers and accused with abundance of compliments. They have insinuated some oblique censures; and they have recommended perfect harmony between the chargers of corruption and peculation, and the persons charged with these crimes.]

13th October, 1782. *Extract of a Translation of a Letter from the Nabob of Arcot to the Chairman of the court of Directors of the East India Company.*

"FATALLY for me, and for the public interest, the company's favour and my unbounded confidence have been lavished on a man totally unfit for the exalted station in which he has been placed, and unworthy of the trusts that have been reposed in him. When I speak of one who has so deeply stabbed my honour, my wounds bleed afresh, and I must be allowed that freedom of expression which the galling reflection of my injuries and my misfortunes naturally draws from me. Shall your servants, unchecked, unrestrained, and unpunished, gratify their private views and ambition, at the expense of my honour, my peace, and my happiness, and to the ruin of my country as well as of your affairs? No sooner had Lord Macartney obtained the favourite object of his ambition, than he betrayed the greatest insolence towards me, the most glaring neglect of the common civilities and attentions paid me by all former governours, in the worst of times, and even by the most inveterate of my enemies. He insulted my servants, endeavoured to defame my character by unjustly censuring my administration, and extended his boundless usurpation to the whole government of my dominions, in all the branches of judicature and

police; and, in violation of the express articles of the agreements, proceeded to send renters into the countries, unapproved of by me, men of bad character, and unequal to my management or responsibility. Though he is chargeable with the greatest acts of cruelty, even to the shedding of blood and cutting off the noses and ears of my subjects, by those exercising his authority in the countries, and that even the duties of religion and public worship have been interrupted or prevented; and, though he carries on all his business by the arbitrary exertion of military force, yet does he not collect from the countries one-fourth of the revenue that should be produced. The statement he pretends to hold forth of expected revenue, is totally fallacious, and can never be realised under the management of his lordship, in the appointment of renters, totally disqualified, rapacious, and irresponsible, who are actually embezzling and dissipating the public revenues that should assist in the support of the war. Totally occupied by his private views, and governed by his passions, he has neglected or sacrificed all the essential objects of public good, and by want of co-operation with Sir Eyre Coote, and refusal to furnish the army with the necessary supplies, has rendered the glorious and repeated victories of the gallant general ineffectual to the expulsion of our cruel enemy. To cover his insufficiency, and veil the discredit attendant on his failure in every measure, he throws out the most illiberal expressions, and institutes unjust accusations against me; and, in aggravation of all the distresses imposed upon me, he has abetted the meanest calumniators, to bring forward false charges against me, and my son Ameer-ul-Omrah, in order to create embarrassment, and for the distress of my mind. My papers and writings sent to you must testify to the whole world the malevolence of his designs, and the means that have been used to forward them. He has violently seized and opened all letters addressed to me and my servants, on my public and private affairs. My vackeel, that attended him, according to ancient custom, has been ignominiously dismissed from his presence, and not suffered to approach the government-house. He has in the meanest manner, and as he thought in secret, been tampering and intriguing with my family and relations for the worst of purposes. And if I express the agonies of my mind under these most pointed injuries and oppressions, and complain of the violence and injustice of Lord Macartney, I am insulted by his affected construction, that my communications are dictated by the insinuations of others. At the same time that his conscious apprehensions for his misconduct, have produced the most abject applications to me, to smother my feelings, and entreaties to write in his lordship's favour to England, and to submit all my affairs to his direction. When his submissions have failed to mould me to his will, he has endeavoured to effect his purposes by menaces of his secret influence with those in power in England, which he pretends to assert, shall be effectual to confirm his usurpation, and to deprive me and my family, in succession, of my rights of sovereignty and government for ever. To such a length have his passions and violences carried him, that all my family, my dependants, and even my friends and visitors, are persecuted with the strongest marks of his displeasure. Every shadow of authority in my person is taken from me, and respect to my name discouraged throughout the whole country. When an officer of high rank in his majesty's service was some time since introduced to me by Lord Macartney, his lordship took occasion to shew a personal derision and contempt of me. Mr. Richard Sullivan, who has attended my durbar under the commission of the governour general and council of Bengal, has experienced his resentment; and Mr. Benfield, *with whom I have no business*, and who, as he has been accustomed to do for many years, has continued to pay me his visits of respect, has felt the weight of his lordship's displeasure, and has had every unmerited insinuation thrown out against him, to prejudice him, and deter him from paying me his compliments as usual.

"Thus, gentlemen, have you delivered me over to a stranger; to a man unacquainted with government and business, and too opinionated to learn; to a man, whose ignorance and prejudices operate to the neglect of every good measure, or the liberal co-operation with any that wish well to the public interests; to a man who, to pursue his own passions, plans, and designs, will certainly ruin all mine, as well as the company's affairs. His mismanagement and obstinacy have caused the loss of many lacs of my revenues, dissipated and embezzled, and every public consideration sacrificed, to his vanity and private views. I beg to offer an instance in proof of my assertions, and to justify the hope I have, that you will cause to be made good to me all the losses I have sustained, by the mal-administration and bad practices of your servants, according to all the account of receipts of former years, and which I made known to Lord Macartney, among other papers of information, in the beginning of his

management in the collections. The district of Ongole produced annually, upon a medium of many years, ninety thousand pagodas; but Lord Macartney *upon receiving a sum of money from Ramchandry*,* let it out to him, in April last, for the inadequate rent of 50,000 pagodas *per annum*, diminishing, in this district alone, near half the accustomed revenues. After this manner hath he exercised his powers over the countries, to suit his own purposes and designs; and this secret mode has he taken to reduce the collections."

1*st November*, 1782. *Copy of a Letter from the Nabob of Arcot to the Court of Directors, &c. Received 7th April*, 1783.

"THE distresses which I have set forth in my former letters, are now increased to such an alarming pitch, by the imprudent measures of your governour, and by the arbitrary and impolitic conduct pursued with the merchants and importers of grain, that the very existence of the fort of Madras seems at stake, and that of the inhabitants of the settlement appears to have been totally overlooked; many thousands have died, and continue hourly to perish of famine, though the capacity of one of your youngest servants, with diligence and attention, by doing justice, and giving reasonable encouragement to the merchants, and by drawing the supplies of grain which the northern countries would have afforded, might have secured us against all those dreadful calamities. I had with much difficulty procured and purchased a small quantity of rice, for the use of myself, my family, and attendants, and with a view of sending off the greatest part of the latter to the northern countries, with a little subsistence in their hands. But what must your surprise be, when you learn, that even this rice was seized by Lord Macartney, with a military force! and thus am I unable to provide for the few people I have about me, who are driven to such extremity and misery, that it gives me pain to behold them. I have desired permission to get a little rice from the northern countries for the subsistence of my people, without its being liable to seizure by your seapoys: this even has been refused me by Lord Macartney. What must your feelings be, on such wanton cruelty, exercised towards me, when you consider that of thousands of villages belonging to me, a single one would have sufficed for my subsistence!"

* See Tellinga letter at the end of this correspondence.

22*d March*, 1783. *Translation of a Letter from the Nabob of Arcot to the Chairman and Directors of the East India Company.—Received from Mr. James Macpherson*, 1*st Jan.* 1784.

"I AM willing to attribute this continued usurpation to the fear of detection in Lord Macartney: he dreads the awful day when the scene of his enormities will be laid open, at my restoration to my country, and when the tongues of my oppressed subjects will be unloosed, and proclaim aloud the cruel tyrannies they have sustained. These sentiments of his lordship's designs are corroborated by his sending, on the 10th instant, two gentlemen to me and my son Ameer-ul-Omrah; and these gentlemen from Lord Macartney especially set forth to me, and to my son, that all dependance on the power of the superiour government of Bengal, to enforce the intentions of the company to restore my country, was vain and groundless; that the company confided in his lordship's judgment and discretion, and upon his representations, and that if I, and my son, Ameer-ul-Omrah, would enter into friendship with Lord Macartney, and sign a paper, declaring all my charges and complaints against him to be false, that his lordship might be induced to write to England, that all his allegations against me and my son were not well-founded; and, notwithstanding his declarations to withhold my country, yet on these considerations, it might be still restored me.

"What must be your feelings for your ancient and faithful friend, on his receiving such insults to his honour and understanding from your principal servant, armed with your authority? From these manœuvres, among thousands I have experienced, the truth must evidently appear to you, that I have not been loaded with those injuries and oppressions from motives of public service, but to answer the private views and interests of his lordship, and his secret agents: *some papers to this point are enclosed*; others, almost without number, must be submitted to your justice, when time and circumstances will enable me fully to investigate those transactions. This opportunity will not permit the full representation of my load of injuries and distresses: I beg leave to refer you to my minister, Mr. Macpherson, for the papers, according to the enclosed list, which accompanied my last dispatches by the Rodney, which I fear have failed; and my correspondence with Lord Macartney, subsequent to that period, such as I have been able to prepare for this opportunity, are enclosed.

"Notwithstanding all the violent acts and declarations of Lord Macartney, yet a consciousness of his own misconduct was the sole incentive to the menaces and overtures he has held out in various shapes. He has been insultingly lavish in his expressions of high respect for my person; has had the insolence to say, that all his measures flowed from his affectionate regard alone; has presumed to say, that all his enmity and oppression were levelled at my son, Ameer-ul-Omrah, to whom he before acknowledged every aid and assistance: and, his lordship being without any just cause or foundation for complaint against us, or a veil to cover his own violences, he has now had recourse to the meanness, and has dared to intimate of my son, in order to intimidate me, and to strengthen his own wicked purposes, to be in league with our enemies the French. You must doubtless be astonished, no less at the assurance, than at the absurdity such a wicked suggestion."

(IN THE NABOB'S OWN HAND.)

"P.S. In my own hand-writing I acquainted Mr. Hastings, as I now do my ancient friends the company, with the insult offered to my honour and understanding, in the extraordinary propositions sent to me by Lord Macartney, through two gentlemen, on the 10th instant, so artfully veiled with menaces, hopes, and promises. But how can Lord Macartney add to his enormities, after his wicked and calumniating insinuations, so evidently directed against me and my family, through my faithful, my dutiful, and beloved son, Ameer-ul-Omrah, who, you well know, has been ever born and bred among the English, whom I have studiously brought up in the warmest sentiments of affection and attachment to them; sentiments, that in his maturity have been his highest ambition to improve, insomuch that he knows no happiness, but in the faithful support of our alliance and connection with the English nation?"

12th August, and Postscript of the 16th August, 1783. Translation of a Letter to the Chairman and Directors of the East India Company. Received from Mr. James Macpherson, 14th January, 1784.

"YOUR astonishment and indignation will be equally raised with mine, when you hear that your president *has dared*, contrary to your intention, to continue to usurp the privileges and hereditary powers of the nabob of the Carnatic, your old and unshaken friend, and the declared ally of the king of Great Britain.

"I will not take up your time by enumerating the particular acts of Lord Macartney's violence, cruelty, and injustice; *they indeed occur too frequently, and fall upon me, and my devoted subjects and country, too thick, to be regularly related.* I refer you to my minister, Mr. James Macpherson, *for a more circumstantial account of the oppressions and enormities by which he has brought both mine* and the company's affairs to the brink of destruction. I trust that such flagrant violations of all justice, honour, and the faith of treaties, will receive the severest marks of your displeasure, and that Lord Macartney's conduct, in making use of your name and authority as a sanction for the continuance of his usurpation, will be disclaimed with the utmost indignation, and followed with the severest punishment. I conceive that his lordship's arbitrary retention of my country and government can only originate in his *insatiable cravings*, in his implacable malevolence against me, and through fear of detection, which must follow the surrender of the Carnatic into my hands, of those nefarious proceedings, which are now suppressed by the arm of violence and power.

"I did not fail to represent to the supreme government of Bengal the deplorable situation to which I was reduced, and the unmerited persecutions I have unremittingly sustained from Lord Macartney; and I earnestly implored them to stretch forth a saving arm, and interpose that controuling power which was vested in them, to check *rapacity and presumption*, and preserve the honour and faith of the company from violation. The governor-general and council not only felt the cruelty and injustice I had suffered, but were greatly alarmed for the fatal consequences that might result from the distrust of the country powers in the professions of the English, when they saw the nabob of the Carnatic, the friend of the company, and the ally of Great Britain, thus stripped of his rights, his dominions, and his dignity, by the most fraudulent means, and under the mask of friendship. The Bengal government had already heard both the Marattas and the Nizam urge as an objection to an alliance with the English, the faithless behaviour of Lord Macartney to a prince whose life had been devoted, and whose treasures had been exhausted, in their service and support; and they did not hesitate to give positive orders to Lord Macartney for the restitution of my government and authority, on such terms as were not only strictly honourable, but equally advantageous to my friends the company; for they justly thought that my

honour and dignity, and *sovereign rights*, were the first objects of my wishes and ambition: But how can I paint my astonishment at Lord Macartney's presumption, in continuing his usurpation, after their positive and reiterated mandates! and, as if nettled by their interference, which he disdained, in redoubling the fury of his violence, and sacrificing the public and myself, to his malice and ungovernable passions!

"I am, gentlemen, at a loss to conceive where his usurpation will stop, and have an end. Has he not solemnly declared that the assignment was only made for the support of war? and, if neither your instructions, nor the orders of his superiours at Bengal, were to be considered as effectual, has not the treaty of peace virtually determined the period of his tyrannical administration? But so far from surrendering the Carnatic into my hands, he has, since that event, affixed advertisements to the walls and gates of the Black Town, for letting to the best bidder the various districts, for the term of three years; and has continued the committee of revenue, which you positively ordered to be abolished, to whom he has allowed enormous salaries, from 6000 to 4000 pagodas per annum, which each member has received from the time of his appointment, though his lordship well knows that most of them are by your orders disqualified, by being my principal creditors.

"If those acts of violence and outrage had been productive of public advantage, I conceive his lordship might have held them forward, in extenuation of his conduct; but whilst he cloaks his justification under the veil of your records, it is impossible to refute his assertions, or to expose to you their fallacy; and when he is no longer able to support his conduct by argument, he refers to those records, where, I understand, he has exercised all his sophistry and malicious insinuations, to render me and my family obnoxious in the eyes of the company, and the British nation; and when the glorious victories of Sir Eyre Coote have been rendered abortive by a constant deficiency of supplies; and when, since the departure of that excellent general to Bengal, whose loss I must ever regret, a dreadful famine, at the close of last year, occasioned by his lordship's neglect to lay up a sufficient stock of grain at a proper season, and from his prohibitory orders to private merchants; and when no exertion has been made, nor advantage gained over the enemy; when Hyder's death and Tippoo's return to his own dominions operated in no degree for the benefit of our affairs; in short, when all has been a continued series of disappointment and disgrace under Lord Macartney's management, (and in him alone has the management been vested,) I want words to convey those ideas of his insufficiency, ignorance, and obstinacy, which I am convinced you would entertain, had you been spectators of his ruinous and destructive conduct.

"But against me and my son, Ameer-ul-Omrah, has his lordship's vengeance chiefly been exerted; even the company's own subordinate zemindars have found better treatment, probably because they were more rich; those of Nizanagoram have been permitted, contrary to your pointed orders, to hold their rich zemindaries at the old disproportionate rate of little more than a sixth part of the real revenue; and my zemindar of Tanjore, though he should have regarded himself equally concerned with us in the event of the war, and from whose fertile country many valuable harvests have been gathered in, which have sold at a vast price, has, I understand, only contributed last year, towards the public exigencies, the very inconsiderable sum of one lac of pagodas, and a few thousand pagodas-worth of grain.

"I am much concerned to acquaint you, that ever since the peace a dreadful famine has swept away many thousands of the followers, and seapoys families of the army, from Lord Macartney's neglect to send down grain to the camp, though the roads are crowded with vessels: but his lordship has been too intent upon his own disgraceful schemes, to attend to the wants of the army. The negotiation with Tippoo, which he has set on foot through the mediation of Monsieur Bussy, has employed all his thoughts, and to the attainment of that object he will sacrifice the dearest interests of the company to gratify his malevolence against me, and for his own private advantages. The endeavour to treat with Tippoo, through the means of the French, must strike you, gentlemen, as highly improper and impolitic; but it must raise your utmost indignation to hear, that by intercepted letters from Bussy to Tippoo, as well as from their respective vakeels, and from various accounts from Cuddalore, we have every reason to conclude that his lordship's secretary, Mr. Staunton, when at Cuddalore, as his agent to settle the cessation of arms with the French, was informed of all their operations and projects, and *consequently that Lord Macartney has secretly connived at Monsieur Bussy's recommendation to Tippoo to return into the Car-*

natic, as the means of procuring the most advantageous terms, and furnishing Lord Macartney with the plea of necessity for concluding a peace after his own manner: and what further confirms the truth of this fact is, that repeated reports, as well as the alarms of the inhabitants to the westward, leave us no reason to doubt that Tippoo is approaching towards us. His lordship has issued public orders, that the garrison store of rice, for which we are indebted to the exertions of the Bengal government, should be immediately disposed of, and has strictly forbid all private grain to be sold; by which act he effectually prohibits all private importation of grain, and may eventually cause as horrid a famine as that which we experienced at the close of last year, from the same short-sighted policy and destructive prohibitions of Lord Macartney.

"But as he has the fabrication of the records in his own hands, he trusts to those partial representations of his character and conduct, because the signatures of those members of government whom he seldom consults, are affixed, as a public sanction; but you may form a just idea of their correctness and propriety, when you are informed, that his lordship, *upon my noticing the heavy disbursements made for secret service money, ordered the sums to be struck off, and the accounts to be erased from the cash-book of the company;* and I think I cannot give you a better proof of his management of my country and revenues, than by calling your attention to his conduct in the Ongole province, and by referring you to his lordship's administration of your own jaghire, from whence he has brought to the public account the sum of twelve hundred pagodas for the last year's revenue, yet blazons forth his vast merits and exertions, and expects to receive the thanks of his committee and council.—I will beg leave to refer you to my minister, James Macpherson, esq. for a more particular account of my sufferings and miseries, to whom I have transmitted copies of all papers that passed with his lordship.

"I cannot conclude without calling your attention to the *situation of my different creditors*, whose claims are the claims of justice, and whose demands I am bound by honour, and every moral obligation, to discharge; it is not therefore without great concern I have heard insinuations tending to question the legality of their right to the payment of those just debts; they proceeded from advances made by them openly and honourably for the support of my own and the public affairs. But I hope the tongue of calumny will never drown the voice of truth and justice; and while that is heard, the wisdom of the English nation cannot fail to accede to an effectual remedy for their distresses, by any arrangement in which their claims may be duly considered, and equitably provided for; and for this purpose my minister, *Mr. Macpherson, will readily subscribe, in my name, to any agreement you may think proper to adopt, founded on the same principles* with either of the engagements I entered into with the supreme government of Bengal, for our mutual interest and advantage.—I always pray for your happiness and prosperity."

6th September, and Postscript of 7th September, 1783. *Translation of a Letter from the Nabob of Arcot to the Chairman and Directors of the East India Company.—Received from Mr. James Macpherson, 14th January*, 1784.

"I REFER you, gentlemen, to my inclosed duplicate, as well as to my minister, Mr. Macpherson, for the particulars of my sufferings. There is no word or action of mine that is not perverted; and though it was my intention to have sent my son Ameer-ul-Omrah, who is well versed in my affairs, to Bengal, to impress those gentlemen with a full sense of my situation, yet I find myself obliged to lay it aside, from the insinuations of the calumniating tongue of Lord Macartney, that takes every licence to traduce every action of my life, and that of my son. I am informed that Lord Macartney, at this late moment, intends to write a letter; I am ignorant of the subject; but fully perceive, that by delaying to send it till the very eve of the dispatch, he means to deprive me of all possibility of communicating my reply, and forwarding it for the information of my friends in England. Conscious of the weak ground on which he stands, he is obliged to have recourse to these artifices to mislead the judgment, and support for a time his unjustifiable measures by deceit and imposition. I wish only to meet and combat his charges and allegations fairly and openly; and I have repeatedly and urgently demanded to be furnished with copies of those parts of his *fabricated* records relative to myself; but as he well knows I should refute his sophistry, I cannot be surprised at his refusal, though I lament that it prevents you, gentlemen, from a clear investigation of his conduct towards me.

"Inclosed you have a translation of an arzee from the killidar of Vellore: *I have thousands of the same kind;* but this just now received

will serve to give you some idea of the miseries brought upon this my devoted country, and the wretched inhabitants that remain in it, by the oppressive hand of Lord Macartney's management; nor will the *embezzlements of collections* thus obtained, when brought before you in *proof*, appear less extraordinary, which *shall certainly be done in due time.*"

Translation of an Arzee, in the Persian Language, from Uzeem ul Doen Cawn, the Kilhdar of Vellore, to the Nabob, dated 1st September, 1783. *Inclosed in the Nabob's Letter to the Court of Directors, September*, 1783.

"I HAVE repeatedly represented to your highness the violences and oppressions exercised by the present amildar [collector of revenue] of Lord Macartney's appointment, over the few remaining inhabitants of the district of Vellore, Ambore, Saulguda, &c.

"The outrages and violences now committed, are of that astonishing nature as were never known or heard of during the administration of the circar. Hyder Naik, the cruellest of tyrants, used every kind of oppression in the circar countries; but even his measures were not like those now pursued. Such of the inhabitants as had escaped the sword and pillage of Hyder Naik, by taking refuge in the woods, and within the walls of Vellore, &c. on the arrival of Lord Macartney's amildar to Vellore, and in consequence of his cowle of protection and support, most cheerfully returned to the villages, set about the cultivation of the lands, and with great pains rebuilt their cottages.—But now the amildar has imprisoned the wives and children of the inhabitants, seized the few jewels that were on the bodies of the women, and then, before the faces of their husbands, flogged them, in order to make them produce other jewels and effects, which he said they had buried somewhere under ground, and to make the inhabitants bring him money, notwithstanding there was yet no cultivation in the country. Terrified with the flagellations, some of them produced their jewels, and wearing apparel of their women, to the amount of ten or fifteen pagodas, which they had hidden; others, who declared they had none, the amildar flogged their women severely, tied cords around their breasts, and tore the sucking children from their teats, and exposed them to the scorching heat of the sun. Those children died, as did the wife of *Ramsoamy*, an inhabitant of Bringpoor. Even this could not stir up compassion in the breast of the amildar. Some of the children that were somewhat large, he exposed to sale. In short, the violences of the amildar are so astonishing, that the people, on seeing their present situation, remember the loss of Hyder with regret. With whomsoever the amildar finds a single measure of *natchiner*, or *rice*, he takes it way from him, and appropriates it to the expenses of the *Sibendy* that he keeps up. No revenues are collected from the countries, but from the effects of the poor wretched inhabitants. Those *ryots* [yeomen] who intended to return to their habitations, hearing of those violences, have fled for refuge, with their wives and children, into Hyder's country. Every day is ushered in closed with these violences and disturbances. I have no power to do any thing; and who will hear what I have to say? My business is to inform your highness, who are my master. The people bring their complaints to me, and I tell them I will write to your highness."*

Translation of a Tellinga Letter from Veir Permaul, Head Dubash to Lord Macartney, in his own hand-writing, *to Rajah Ramchunda, the renter of Ongole; dated 25th of*

* [The above-recited practices, or practices similar to them, have prevailed in almost every part of the miserable countries on the coast of Coromandel, for near twenty years past. That they prevailed as strongly and generally as they could prevail, under the administration of the nabob, there can be no question, notwithstanding the assertion in the beginning of the above petition; nor will it be otherwise, whilst affairs are conducted upon the principles which influence the present system. Whether the particulars here asserted are true or false, neither the court of directors nor their ministry have thought proper to enquire. If they are true, in order to bring them to affect Lord Macartney, it ought to be proved that the complaint was made *to him; and that he had refused redress.* Instead of this fair course, the complaint is carried to the court of directors. The above is one of the documents transmitted by the nabob, in proof of his charge of corruption against Lord Macartney. If genuine, it is conclusive, at least against Lord Macartney's principle agent and manager. If it be a forgery (as in all likelihood it is) it is conclusive against the nabob and his evil counsellors; and fully demonstrates, if any thing further were necessary to demonstate, the necessity of the clause in Mr. Fox's bill prohibiting the residence of the native princes in the company's principal settlements; which clause was, for obvious reasons, not admitted into Mr. Pitt's. It shews too the absolute necessity of a severe and exemplary punishment on certain of his English evil counsellors and creditors, by whom such practices are carried on.]

the Hindoo month Mauseay, in the year Plavanamal, corresponding to 5th March, 1782.

I PRESENT my respects to you, and am very well here, wishing to hear frequently of your welfare.

Your peasher Vancatroyloo has brought the Vissool Bakees, and delivered them to me, as *also what you sent him for me to deliver to my master, which I have done. My master at first refused to take it, because he is unacquainted with your disposition*, or what kind of a person you are. But after I made encomiums on your goodness and greatness of mind, and took my oath to the same, and that *it would not become public*, but be held as precious as our lives, *my master accepted it*. You may remain satisfied, that I will get the Ongole business settled in your name; I will cause the jamaubundee to be settled agreeable to your desire. It was formerly the nabob's intention to give this business to you, as the governour knows full well, but did not at that time agree to it, which you must be well acquainted with.

Your peasher Vancatroyloo is a very careful good man—he is well experienced in business—*he has bound me by an oath to keep all this business secret, and that his own, yours, and my lives are responsible for it*. I write this letter to you with the greatest reluctance, and I signified the same to your peasher, and declared that I would not write to you by any means; to this the peasher urged, that *if I did not write to his master, how could he know to whom he (the peasher) delivered the money*, and what must his master think of it? therefore I write you this letter, and send it by my servant Ramanah, accompanied by the peasher's servant, and it will come safe to your hands: after perusal you will send it back to me immediately—until I receive it I don't like to eat my victuals, or take any sleep. Your peasher took his oath, and urged me to write this for your satisfaction, and has engaged to me that I shall have this letter returned to me in the space of twelve days.

The present governour is not like the former governours—he is a very great man in Europe—and all the great men of Europe are much obliged to him for his condescension in accepting the government of this place. It is his custom when he makes friendship with any one to continue it always, and if *he is at enmity with any one, he never will desist till he has worked his destruction; he is now exceedingly displeased with the nabob, and you will understand by and by that the nabob's business cannot be carried on;* he (the nabob) will have no power to do any thing in his own affairs; *you have therefore no room to fear him*. You may remain with a contented mind—I desired the governour to write you a letter for your satisfaction; the governour said he would do so when the business was settled. This letter you must peruse as soon as possible, and send it back with all speed by the bearer Ramadoo, accompanied by three or four of your people, to the end that no accident may happen on the road. These people must be ordered to march in the night only, and to arrive here with the greatest dispatch. You sent ten mangoes for my master, and two for me, all which I have delivered to my master, thinking that ten was not sufficient to present him with. I write this for your information, and salute you with ten thousand respects.

I, Muttu Kistnah, of Madras Patnam, dubash, declare, That I perfectly understand the Gentoo language; and do most solemnly affirm, that the foregoing is a true translation of the annexed paper writing from the Gentoo language.

(*Signed*) Muttu Kistnah.

SUBSTANCE OF MR. BURKE'S SPEECH

IN THE DEBATE ON THE ARMY ESTIMATES, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ON TUESDAY, THE 9TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1790. COMPREHENDING A DISCUSSION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF AFFAIRS IN FRANCE.

MR. BURKE's speech on the report of the army estimates has not been correctly stated in some of the public papers. It is of consequence to him not to be misunderstood. The matter which incidentally came into discussion is of the most serious importance. It is thought that the heads and substance of the speech will answer the purpose sufficiently. If in making the abstract, through defect of memory, in the person who now gives it, any difference at all should be perceived from the speech as it was spoken, it will not, the editor imagines, be found in any thing which may amount to a retraction of the opinions he then maintained, or to any softening in the expressions in which they were conveyed.

Mr. Burke spoke a considerable time in answer to various arguments which had been insisted upon by Mr. Grenville and Mr. Pitt, for keeping an increased peace establishment, and against an improper jealousy of the ministers, in whom a full confidence, subject to responsibility, ought to be placed, on account of their knowledge of the real situation of affairs; the exact state of which it frequently happened, that they could not disclose, without violating the constitutional and political secrecy, necessary to the well-being of their country.

Mr. Burke said in substance, That confidence might become a vice, and jealousy a virtue, according to circumstances. That confidence, of all public virtues, was the most dangerous, and jealousy in a house of commons, of all public vices, the most tolerable; especially where the number and the charge of standing armies, in time of peace, was the question.

That in the annual mutiny bill, the annual army was declared to be for the purpose of preserving the balance of power in Europe. The propriety of its being larger or smaller depended, therefore, upon the true state of that balance. If the increase of peace establishments demanded of parliament agreed with the manifest appearance of the balance, confidence in ministers, as to the particulars, would be very proper. If the increase was not at all supported by any such appearance, he thought great jealousy might, and ought to be, entertained on that subject.

That he did not find, on a review of all Europe, that, politically, we stood in the smallest degree of danger from any one state or kingdom it contained; nor that any other foreign powers than our own allies were likely to obtain a considerable preponderance in the scale.

That France had hitherto been our first object, in all considerations concerning the balance of power. The presence or absence of France totally varied every sort of speculation relative to that balance.

That France is, at this time, in a political light, to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe. Whether she could ever appear in it again, as a leading power, was not easy to determine: but at present he considered France as not politically existing; and most assuredly it would take up much time to restore her to her former active existence—*Gallos quoque in bellis floruisse audiviimus*, might possibly be the language of the rising generation. He did not mean to deny that it was our duty to keep our eye on that nation, and to regulate our preparation by the symptoms of her recovery.

That it was to her *strength*, not to her *form of government*, which we were to attend; because republics, as well as monarchies, were susceptible of ambition, jealousy, and anger, the usual causes of war.

But if, while France continued in this swoon, we should go on increasing our expenses, we should certainly make ourselves less a match for her, when it became our concern to arm.

It was said, that as she had speedily fallen, she might speedily rise again. He doubted this. That the fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to lift a weight up to that height again was difficult, and opposed by the laws of physical and political gravitation.

In a political view, France was low indeed. She had lost every thing, even to her name.

'Jacet ingens littore truncus,
Avolsumque humeris *caput*, et sine *nomine* corpus."*

He was astonished at it—he was alarmed at it—he trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatness.

Since the house had been prorogued in the summer much work was done in France. The French had shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto existed in the world. In that very short space of time they had completely pulled down to the ground, their monarchy; their church; their nobility; their law; their revenue; their army; their navy; their commerce; their arts; and their manufactures. They had done their business for us as rivals, in a way in which twenty Ramillies or Blenheims could never have done it. Were we absolute conquerours, and France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should be ashamed to send a commission to settle their affairs, which could impose so hard a law upon the French, and so destructive of all their consequence as a nation, as that they had imposed on themselves.

France, by the mere circumstance of its vicinity, had been, and in a degree always must be, an object of our vigilance, either with regard to her actual power, or to her influence and example. As to the former, he had spoken; as to the latter, (her example,) he should say a few words: for by this example our friendship and our intercourse with that nation had once been, and might again, become more dangerous to us than their worst hostility.

In the last century, Louis the Fourteenth had established a greater and better disciplined military force than ever had been before seen in Europe, and with it a perfect despotism. Though that despotism was proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, splendour, magnificence, and even covered over with the imposing robes of science, literature, and arts, it was, in government, nothing better than a painted and gilded tyranny; in religion, a hard, stern intolerance, the fit companion and auxiliary to the despotic tyranny which prevailed in its government. The same character of despotism insinuated itself into every court of Europe—the same spirit of disproportioned magnificence—the same love of standing armies, above the ability of the people. In particular, our then sovereigns, King Charles and King James, fell in love with the government of their neighbour, so flattering to the pride of kings. A similarity of sentiments brought on connections equally dangerous to the interests and liberties of their country. It were well that the infection had gone no farther than the throne. The admiration of a government flourishing and successful, unchecked in its operations, and seeming therefore to compass its objects more speedily and effectually, gained something upon all ranks of people. The good patriots of that day, however, struggled against it. They sought nothing more anxiously than to break off all communication with France, and to beget a total alienation from its councils and its example; which, by the animosity prevalent between the abettors of their religious system and the assertors of ours, was, in some degree, effected.

This day the evil is totally changed in France; but there is an evil there. The disease is altered; but the vicinity of the two countries remains, and must remain; and the natural mental habits of mankind are such, that the present distemper of France is far more likely to be contagious than the old one; for it is not quite easy to spread a passion for servitude among the people: but in all evils of the opposite kind our natural inclinations are flattered. In the case of despotism there is the *facinus crimen servitutis;* in the last the *falsa* species *libertatis;* and accordingly, as the historian says, *pronis auribus accipitur*.

In the last age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France in the net of a relentless despotism. It is not necessary to say any thing upon that example. It exists no longer. Our present danger from the example of a people, whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from anarchy; a danger of being led through an admiration of successful fraud and violence, to an imitation of the excesses of an irrational,

* Mr. Burke, probably, had in his mind the remainder of the passage, and was filled with some congenial apprehensions:

"Hæc finis Priami fatorum; hic exitus illum
Sorte tulit, Trojam incensam, et prolapsa videntem
Pergama; tot quandam populis, terrisque, superbum
Regnatorem Asiæ. Jacet ingens littore truncus,
Avolsumque humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.
At me tum primum sævus circumstetit horror;
Obstupui: *subiit cari genitoris imago*"——

unprincipled, proscribing, confiscating, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy. On the side of religion, the danger of their example is no longer from intolerance, but from atheism; a foul, unnatural vice, foe to all the dignity and consolation of mankind; which seems in France, for a long time, to have been embodied into a faction, accredited, and almost avowed.

These are our present dangers from France: but, in his opinion, the very worst part of the example set is, in the late assumption of citizenship by the army, and the whole of the arrangement, or rather disarrangement of their military. He was sorry that his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) had dropped even a word expressive of exultation on that circumstance; or that he seemed of opinion that the objection from standing armies was at all lessened by it. He attributed this opinion of Mr. Fox entirely to his known zeal for the best of all causes, Liberty. That it was with a pain inexpressible he was obliged to have even the shadow of a difference with his friend, whose authority would be always great with him, and with all thinking people—*Quæ maxima semper censetur nobis, et erit quæ maxima semper.*—His confidence in Mr. Fox was such, and so ample, as to be almost implicit. That he was not ashamed to avow that degree of docility. That when the choice is well made, it strengthens instead of oppressing our intellect. That he who calls in the aid of an equal understanding doubles his own. He who profits of a superiour understanding, raises his powers to a level with the height of a superiour understanding he unites with. He had found the benefit of such a junction, and would not lightly depart from it. He wished almost, on all occasions, that his sentiments were understood to be conveyed in Mr. Fox's words; and that he wished, as among the greatest benefits he could wish the country, an eminent share of power to that right honourable gentleman; because he knew that, to his great and masterly understanding, he had joined the greatest possible degree of that natural moderation, which is the best corrective of power; that he was of the most artless, candid, open, and benevolent disposition; disinterested in the extreme; of a temper mild and placable, even to a fault; without one drop of gall in his whole constitution.

That the house must perceive, from his coming forward to mark an expression or two of his best friend, how anxious he was to keep the distemper of France from the least countenance in England, where he was sure some wicked persons had shewn a strong disposition to recommend an imitation of the French spirit of reform. He was so strongly opposed to any the least tendency towards the means of introducing a democracy like theirs, as well as to the end itself, that much as it would afflict him, if such a thing could be attempted, and that any friend of his could concur in such measures, (he was far, very far, from believing they could,) he would abandon his best friends, and join with his worst enemies to oppose either the means or the end; and to resist all violent exertions of the spirit of innovation, so distant from all principles of true and safe reformation; a spirit well calculated to overturn states, but perfectly unfit to amend them.

That he was no enemy to reformation. Almost every business in which he was much concerned, from the first day he sat in that house to that hour, was a business of reformation; and when he had not been employed in correcting, he had been employed in resisting abuses. Some traces of this spirit in him now stand on their statute-book. In his opinion, any thing which unnecessarily tore to pieces the conexture of the state, not only prevented all real reformation, but introduced evils which would call, but perhaps, call in vain, for new reformation.

That he thought the French nation very unwise. What they valued themselves on, was a disgrace to them. They had gloried (and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory) in making a revolution: as if revolutions were good things in themselves. All the horrours, and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to their revolution, which attend its progress, and which may virtually attend it in its establishment, pass for nothing with the lovers of revolutions. The French have made their way through the destruction of their country, to a bad constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. They were in possession of it the day the states met in separate orders. Their business, had they been either virtuous, or wise, or had been left to their own judgment, was to secure the stability and independence of the states, according to those orders, under the monarch on the throne. It was then their duty to redress grievances.

Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their state, to which they were called by their monarch, and sent by their country, they were made to take a very different course. They first destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the state, and to give it a steady direction; and

which furnish sure correctives to any violent spirit which may prevail in any of the orders. These balances existed in their oldest constitution; and in the constitution of this country; and in the constitution of all the countries in Europe. These they rashly destroyed, and then they melted down the whole into one incongruous, ill-connected mass.

When they had done this, they instantly, and with the most atrocious perfidy and breach of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property, and consequently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set, in confiscating all the possessions of the church. They made and recorded a sort of *institute* and *digest* of anarchy, called the rights of man, in such a pedantic abuse of elementary principles as would have disgraced boys at school; but this declaration of rights was worse than trifling and pedantic in them; as by their name and authority they systematically destroyed every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this mad declaration they subverted the state; and brought on such calamities as no country, without a long war, has ever been known to suffer, and which may in the end produce such a war, and perhaps, many such.

With them the question was not between despotism and liberty. The sacrifice they made of the peace and power of their country was not made on the altar of freedom. Freedom, and a better security for freedom than that they have taken, they might have had without any sacrifice at all. They brought themselves into all the calamities they suffer, not that through them they might obtain a British constitution; they plunged themselves headlong into those calamities, to prevent themselves from settling into that constitution, or into any thing resembling it.

That if they should perfectly succeed in what they propose, as they are likely enough to do, and establish a democracy, or a mob of democracies, in a country circumstanced like France, they will establish a very bad government—a very bad species of tyranny.

That, the worst effect of all their proceeding was on their military, which was rendered an army for every purpose but that of defence. That, if the question was, whether soldiers were to forget they were citizens, as an abstract proposition, he could have no difference about it; though as it is usual, when abstract principles are to be applied, much was to be thought on the manner of uniting the character of citizen and soldier. But as applied to the events which had happened in France, where the abstract principle was clothed with its circumstances, he thought that his friend would agree with him, that what was done there furnished no matter of exultation, either in the act or the example. These soldiers were not citizens; but base hireling mutineers, and mercenary sordid deserters, wholly destitute of any honourable principle. Their conduct was one of the fruits of that anarchic spirit, from the evils of which a democracy itself was to be resorted to, by those who were the least disposed to that form, as a sort of refuge. It was not an army in corps and with discipline, and embodied under the respectable patriot citizens of the state in resisting tyranny. Nothing like it. It was the case of common soldiers deserting from their officers, to join a furious, licentious populace. It was a desertion to a cause, the real object of which was to level all those institutions, and to break all those connections, natural and civil, that regulate and hold together the community by a chain of subordination; to raise soldiers against their officers; servants against their masters; tradesmen against their customers; artificers against their employers; tenants against their landlords; curates against their bishops; and children against their parents. That this cause of theirs was not an enemy to servitude, but to society.

He wished the house to consider, how the members would like to have their mansions pulled down and pillaged, their persons abused, insulted, and destroyed; their title deeds brought out and burned before their faces, and themselves and their families driven to seek refuge in every nation throughout Europe, for no other reason than this; that without any fault of theirs, they were born gentlemen, and men of property, and were suspected of a desire to preserve their consideration and their estates. The desertion in France was to aid an abominable sedition, the very professed principle of which was an implacable hostility to nobility and gentry, and whose savage war-whoop was "*à l' Aristocrate*," by which senseless, bloody cry, they animated one another to rapine and murder; whilst abetted by ambitious men of another class, they were crushing every thing respectable and virtuous in their nation, and to their power disgracing almost every name, by which we formerly knew there was such a country in the world as France.

He knew too well, and he felt as much as any man, how difficult it was to accommodate a standing army to a free constitution, or to any constitution. An armed, disciplined body

is, in its essence, dangerous to liberty; undisciplined it is ruinous to society. Its component parts are, in the latter case, neither good citizens nor good soldiers. What have they thought of in France, under such a difficulty as almost puts the human faculties to a stand? They have put their army under such a variety of principles of duty, that it is more likely to breed litigants, pettifoggers, and mutineers, than soldiers.* They have set up, to balance their crown army, another army, deriving under another authority, called a municipal army—a balance of armies, not of orders. These latter they have destroyed with every mark of insult and oppression. States may, and they will best, exist with a partition of civil powers. Armies cannot exist under a divided command. This state of things he thought, in effect, a state of war, or, at best, but a truce instead of peace, in the country.

What a dreadful thing is a standing army, for the conduct of the whole or any part of which, no man is responsible! In the present state of the French crown army, is the crown responsible for the whole of it? Is there any general who can be responsible for the obedience of a brigade? any colonel for that of a regiment? Any captain for that of a company? And as to the municipal army, reinforced as it is by the new citizen-deserters, under whose command are they? Have we not seen them, not led by, but dragging their nominal commander with a rope about his neck, when they, or those whom they accompanied, proceeded to the most atrocious acts of treason and murder? Are any of these armies? Are any of these citizens?

We have in such a difficulty as that of fitting a standing army to the state, he conceived, done much better. We have not distracted our army by divided principles of obedience. We have put them under a single authority, with a simple (our common) oath of fidelity; and we keep the whole under our annual inspection. This was doing all that could be safely done.

He felt some concern that this strange thing called a Revolution in France, should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the Revolution in England; and the conduct of the soldiery, on that occasion, compared with the behaviour of some of the troops of France in the present instance. At that period the Prince of Orange, a prince of the blood royal in England, was called in by the flower of the English aristocracy to defend its ancient constitution, and not to level all distinctions. To this prince, so invited, the aristocratic leaders who commanded the troops went over with their several corps, in bodies, to the deliverer of their country. Aristocratic leaders brought up the corps of citizens who newly enlisted in this cause. Military obedience changed its object; but military discipline was not for a moment interrupted in its principle. The troops were ready for war, but indisposed to mutiny.

But as the conduct of the English armies was different, so was that of the whole English nation at that time. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution (as it is called) and that of France are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. With us it was the case of a legal monarch attempting arbitrary power—in France it is the case of an arbitrary monarch, beginning, from whatever cause, to legalise his authority. The one was to be resisted, the other was to be managed and directed; but in neither case was the order of the state to be changed, lest government might be ruined, which ought only to be corrected and legalised. With us we got rid of the man, and preserved the constituent parts of the state. There they get rid of the constituent parts of the state, and keep the man. What we did was in truth and substance, and in a constitutional light, a revolution, not made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. Perhaps it might be shown that we strengthened it very considerably. The nation kept the same ranks, the same orders, the same privileges, the same franchises, the same rules for property, the same subordinations, the same order in the law, in the revenue, and in the magistracy; the same lords, the same commons, the same corporations, the same electors.

The church was not impaired. Her estates, her majesty, her splendour, her orders and gradations continued the same. She was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of a certain intolerance, which was her weakness and disgrace. The church and the state were the same after the revolution that they were before, but better secured in every part.

Was little done because a revolution was not made in the constitution? No! Every thing was done; because we commenced with reparation not with ruin. Accordingly the state flourished. Instead of lying as dead, in a sort of trance, or exposed as some others, in an

* They are sworn to obey the king, the nation, and the law.

epileptic fit, to the pity or derision of the world, for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, impotent to every purpose but that of dashing out her brains against the pavement, Great Britain rose above the standard, even of her former self. An sera of a more improved domestic prosperity then commenced, and still continues, not only unimpaired, but growing, under the wasting hand of time. All the energies of the country were awakened. England never preserved a firmer countenance, or a more vigorous arm, to all her enemies, and to all her rivals. Europe under her respired and revived. Every where she appeared as the protector, assertor, or avenger of liberty. A war was made and supported against fortune itself. The treaty of Ryswick, which first limited the power of France, was soon after made: the grand alliance very shortly followed, which shook to the foundations the dreadful power which menaced the independence of mankind. The states of Europe lay happy under the shade of a great and free monarchy, which knew how to be great without endangering its own peace at home, or the internal or external peace of any of its neighbours.

Mr. Burke said he should have felt very unpleasantly if he had not delivered these sentiments. He was near the end of his natural, probably still nearer the end of his political career; that he was weak and weary; and wished for rest. That he was little disposed to controversies, or what is called a detailed opposition. That at his time of life, if he could not do something by some sort of weight of opinion, natural or acquired, it was useless and indecorous to attempt any thing by mere struggle. *Turpe senex miles.* That he had for that reason little attended the army business, or that of the revenue, or almost any other matter of detail for some years past. That he had, however, his task. He was far from condemning such opposition; on the contrary, he most highly applauded it, where a just occasion existed for it, and gentlemen had vigour and capacity to pursue it. Where a great occasion occurred, he was, and while he continued in parliament, would be among the most active and the most earnest, as he hoped he had shewn on a late event. With respect to the constitution itself, he wished few alterations in it. Happy if he left it not the worse for any share he had taken in its service.

Mr. Fox then rose, and declared, in substance, that so far as regarded the French army, he went no farther than the general principle, by which that army shewed itself indisposed to be an instrument in the servitude of their fellow-citizens, but did not enter into the particulars of their conduct. He declared, that he did not affect a democracy. That he always thought any of the simple, unbalanced governments bad; simple monarchy, simple aristocracy, simple democracy; he held them all imperfect or vicious: all were bad by themselves: the composition alone was good. That these had been always his principles, in which he had agreed with his friend Mr. Burke, of whom he said many kind and flattering things, which Mr. Burke, I take it for granted, will know himself too well to think he merits, from any thing but Mr. Fox's acknowledged good-nature. Mr. Fox thought, however, that, in many cases, Mr. Burke was rather carried too far by his hatred to innovation.

Mr. Burke said, he well knew that these had been Mr. Fox's invariable opinions; that they were a sure ground for the confidence of his country. But he had been fearful, that cabals of very different intentions, would be ready to make use of his great name, against his character and sentiments, in order to derive a credit to their destructive machinations.

Mr. Sheridan then rose, and made a lively and eloquent speech against Mr. Burke; in which, among other things, he said that Mr Burke had libelled the national assembly of France, and had cast out reflections on such characters as those of the Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Bailly.

Mr. Burke said that he did not libel the national assembly of France, whom he considered very little in the discussion of these matters. That he thought all the substantial power resided in the republic of Paris, whose authority guided, or whose example was followed by, all the republics of France. The republic of Paris had an army under their orders, and not under those of the national assembly.

N. B. As to the particular gentlemen, I do not remember that Mr. Burke mentioned either of them—certainly not Mr. Bailly. He alluded, undoubtedly, to the case of the Marquis de la Fayette; but whether what he asserted of him be a libel on him, must be left to those who are acquainted with the business.

Mr. Pitt concluded the debate with becoming gravity and dignity, and a reserve on both sides of the question, as related to France, fit for a person in a ministerial situation. He said, that what he had spoken only regarded France when she should unite, which he rather thought she soon might, with the liberty she had acquired, the blessings of law and order. He, too, said several civil things concerning the sentiments of Mr. Burke, as applied to this country.

MR. BURKE'S REFLECTIONS

ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE, AND ON THE PROCEEDINGS IN CERTAIN SOCIETIES IN LONDON, RELATIVE TO THAT EVENT. IN A LETTER INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SENT TO A GENTLEMAN IN PARIS. 1790.

It may not be unnecessary to inform the Reader, that the following Reflections had their origin in a correspondence between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of desiring his opinion upon the important transactions, which then, and ever since, have so much occupied the attention of all men. An answer was written some time in the month of October 1789; but it was kept back upon prudential considerations. That letter is alluded to in the beginning of the following sheets. It has been since forwarded to the person to whom it was addressed. The reasons for the delay in sending it were assigned in a short letter to the same gentleman. This produced on his part a new and pressing application for the Author's sentiments.

The author began a second and more full discussion on the subject. This he had some thoughts of publishing early in the last spring; but the matter gaining upon him, he found that what he had undertaken not only far exceeded the measure of a letter, but that its importance required rather a more detailed consideration than at that time he had any leisure to bestow upon it. However, having thrown down his first thoughts in the form of a letter, and indeed when he sat down to write, having intended it for a private letter, he found it difficult to change the form of address, when his sentiments had grown into a greater extent, and had received another direction. A different plan, he is sensible, might be more favourable to a commodious division and distribution of his matter.

REFLECTIONS, &c.

Dear Sir,

You are pleased to call again, and with some earnestness, for my thoughts on the late proceedings in France. I will not give you reason to imagine that I think my sentiments of such value as to wish myself to be solicited about them. They are of too little consequence to be very anxiously either communicated or withheld. It was from attention to you, and to you only, that I hesitated at the time when you first desired to receive them. In the first letter I had the honour to write to you, and which at length I send, I wrote neither for, nor from, any description of men; nor shall I in this. My errours, if any, are my own. My reputation alone is to answer for them.

You see, Sir, by the long letter I have transmitted to you, that, though I do most heartily wish that France may be animated by a spirit of rational liberty, and that I think you bound, in all honest policy, to provide a permanent body, in which that spirit may reside, and an effectual organ, by which it may act, it is my misfortune to entertain great doubts concerning several material points in your late transactions.

You imagined, when you wrote last, that I might possibly be reckoned among the approvers of certain proceedings in France, from the solemn public seal of sanction they have received from two clubs of gentlemen in London, called the Constitutional Society, and the Revolution Society.

I certainly have the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the constitution of this kingdom, and the principles of the glorious revolution are held in high reverence: and I reckon myself among the most forward in my zeal for maintaining that constitution and those principles in their utmost purity and vigour. It is because I do so, that I think it necessary for me, that there should be no mistake. Those who cultivate the memory of our revolution, and those who are attached to the constitution of this kingdom, will take good care how they are involved with persons who, under the pretext of zeal towards the revolution and constitution, too frequently wander

from their true principles; and are ready on every occasion to depart from the firm but cautious and deliberate spirit which produced the one, and which presides in the other. Before I proceed to answer the more material particulars in your letter, I shall beg leave to give you such information as I have been able to obtain of the two clubs which have thought proper, as bodies, to interfere in the concerns of France; first assuring you, that I am not, and that I have never been, a member of either of those societies.

The first, calling itself the Constitutional Society, or Society for Constitutional Information, or by some such title, is, I believe, of seven or eight years standing. The institution of this society appears to be of a charitable, and so far of a laudable, nature: it was intended for the circulation, at the expense of the members, of many books, which few others would be at the expense of buying; and which might lie on the hands of the booksellers, to the great loss of an useful body of men. Whether the books so charitably circulated, were ever as charitably read, is more than I know. Possibly several of them have been exported to France; and, like goods not in request here, may with you have found a market. I have heard much talk of the lights to be drawn from books that are sent from hence. What improvements they have had in their passage (as it is said some liquors are meliorated by crossing the sea) I cannot tell: but I never heard a man of common judgment, or the least degree of information, speak a word in praise of the greater part of the publications circulated by that society; nor have their proceedings been accounted, except by some of themselves, as of any serious consequence.

Your national assembly seems to entertain much the same opinion that I do of this poor charitable club. As a nation, you reserved the whole stock of your eloquent acknowledgments for the Revolution Society; when their fellows in the Constitutional were, in equity, entitled to some share. Since you have selected the Revolution Society as the great object of your national thanks and praises, you will think me excusable in making its late conduct the subject of my observations. The national assembly of France has given importance to these gentlemen by adopting them; and they return the favour, by acting as a committee in England for extending the principles of the national assembly. Henceforward we must consider them as a kind of privileged persons; as no inconsiderable members in the diplomatic body. This is one among the revolutions which have given splendour to obscurity, and distinction to undiscerned merit. Until very lately I do not recollect to have heard of this club. I am quite sure that it never occupied a moment of my thoughts; nor, I believe, those of any person out of their own set. I find, upon inquiry, that on the anniversary of the revolution in 1688, a club of dissenters, but of what denomination I know not, have long had the custom of hearing a sermon in one of their churches; and that afterwards they spent the day cheerfully, as other clubs do, at the tavern. But I never heard that any public measure, or political system, much less that the merits of the constitution of any foreign nation, had been the subject of a formal proceeding at their festivals; until, to my inexpressible surprise, I found them in a sort of public capacity, by a congratulatory address, giving an authoritative sanction to the proceedings of the national assembly in France.

In the ancient principles and conduct of the club, so far at least as they were declared, I see nothing to which I could take exception. I think it very probable, that for some purpose, new members may have entered among them; and that some truly Christian politicians, who love to dispense benefits, but are careful to conceal the hand which distributes the dole, may have made them the instruments of their pious designs. Whatever I may have reason to suspect concerning private management, I shall speak of nothing as of a certainty but what is public.

For one, I should be sorry to be thought, directly or indirectly, concerned in their proceedings. I certainly take my full share, along with the rest of the world, in my individual and private capacity, in speculating on what has been done, or is doing, on the public stage; in any place ancient or modern; in the republic of Rome, or the republic of Paris; but having no general apostolical mission, being a citizen of a particular state, and being bound up in a considerable degree, by its public will, I should think it at least improper and irregular for me to open a formal public correspondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government under which I live.

I should be still more unwilling to enter into that correspondence, under any thing like an equivocal description, which to many, unacquainted with our usages, might make the address, in which I joined, appear as the act of persons in some sort of corporate capacity, acknowledged by the laws of this kingdom, and authorized to speak the sense of some part of

it. On account of the ambiguity and uncertainty of unauthorized general descriptions, and of the deceit which may be practised under them, and not from mere formality, the house of commons would reject the most sneaking petition for the most trifling object, under that mode of signature to which you have thrown open the folding-doors of your presence chamber, and have ushered into your national assembly with as much ceremony and parade, and with as great a bustle of applause, as if you had been visited by the whole representative majesty of the whole English nation. If what this society has thought proper to send forth had been a piece of argument, it would have signified little whose argument it was. It would be neither the more nor the less convincing on account of the party it came from. But this is only a vote and resolution. It stands solely on authority; and in this case it is the mere authority of individuals, few of whom appear. Their signatures ought, in my opinion, to have been annexed to their instrument. The world would then have the means of knowing how many they are; who they are; and of what value their opinions may be, from their personal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, or their lead and authority in this state. To me, who am but a plain man, the proceeding looks a little too refined, and too ingenious; it has too much the air of a political stratagem, adopted for the sake of giving, under a high-sounding name, an importance to the public declarations of this club, which, when the matter came to be closely inspected, they did not altogether so well deserve. It is a policy that has very much the complexion of a fraud.

I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that society, be he who he will; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without inquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered? Can I now congratulate the same nation upon its freedom? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed among the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a mad-man, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty? Am I to congratulate a highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the gallies, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphysic knight of the sorrowful countenance.

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air is plainly broke loose: but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver; and adulation is not of more service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government; with public force; with the discipline and obedience of armies; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue; with morality and religion; with solidity and property; with peace and order; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and it is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please: we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate insulated private men; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is *power*. Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the use which is made of *power;* and particularly of so trying a thing as *new* power in *new* persons, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions they have little or no experience, and in situations, where those who appear the most stir-

ring in the scene may possibly not be the real movers.

All these considerations however were below the transcendental dignity of the revolution society. Whilst I continued in the country, from whence I had the honour of writing to you, I had but an imperfect idea of their transactions. On my coming to town, I sent for an account of their proceedings, which had been published by their authority, containing a sermon of Dr. Price, with the Duke de Rochefaucault's and the Archbishop of Aix's letter, and several other documents annexed. The whole of that publication, with the manifest design of connecting the affairs of France with those of England, by drawing us into an imitation of the conduct of the national assembly, gave me a considerable degree of uneasiness. The effect of that conduct upon the power, credit, prosperity, and tranquillity of France, became every day more evident. The form of constitution to be settled, for its future polity, became more clear. We are now in a condition to discern, with tolerable exactness, the true nature of the object held up to our imitation. If the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others prudence of a higher order may justify us in speaking our thoughts. The beginnings of confusion with us in England are at present feeble enough; but with you, we have seen an infancy still more feeble, growing by moments into a strength to heap mountains upon mountains, and to wage war with heaven itself. Whenever our neighbour's house is on fire, it cannot be amiss for the engines to play a little on our own. Better to be despised for too anxious apprehensions, than ruined by too confident a security.

Solicitous chiefly for the peace of my own country, but by no means unconcerned for yours, I wish to communicate more largely, what was at first intended only for your private satisfaction. I shall still keep your affairs in my eye, and continue to address myself to you. Indulging myself in the freedom of epistolary intercourse, I beg leave to throw out my thoughts, and express my feelings, just as they arise in my mind, with very little attention to formal method. I set out with the proceedings of the revolution society; but I shall not confine myself to them. Is it possible I should? It looks to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs of France alone, but all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. The most wonderful things are brought about in many instances by means the most absurd and ridiculous; in the most ridiculous modes; and apparently, by the most contemptible instruments. Every thing seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts of follies. In viewing this monstrous tragicomic scene, the most opposite passions necessarily succeed, and sometimes mix with each other in the mind; alternate contempt and indignation; alternate laughter and tears; alternate scorn and horrour.

It cannot however be denied, that to some this strange scene appeared in quite another point of view. Into them it inspired no other sentiments than those of exultation and rapture. They saw nothing in what has been done in France, but a firm and temperate exertion of freedom; so consistent, on the whole, with morals and with piety, as to make it deserving not only of the secular applause of dashing Machiavelian politicians, but to render it a fit theme for all the devout effusions of sacred eloquence.

On the forenoon of the 4th of November last, Doctor Richard Price, a non-conforming minister of eminence, preached at the dissenting meeting-house of the Old Jewry, to his club or society, a very extraordinary miscellaneous sermon, in which there are some good moral and religious sentiments, and not ill expressed, mixed up with a sort of porridge of various political opinions and reflections: but the revolution in France is the grand ingredient in the cauldron. I consider the address transmitted by the revolution society to the national assembly through Earl Stanhope, as originating in the principles of the sermon, and as a corollary from them. It was moved by the preacher of that discourse. It was passed by those who came reeking from the effect of the sermon, without any censure or qualification, expressed or implied. If, however, any of the gentlemen concerned shall wish to separate the sermon from the resolution, they know how to acknowledge the one, and to disavow the other. They may do it: I cannot.

For my part, I looked on that sermon as the public declaration of a man much connected with literary caballers, and intriguing philosophers; with political theologians, and theological politicians, both at home and abroad. I know they set him up as a sort of oracle; because, with the best intentions in the world, he naturally *philippizes*, and chaunts his prophetic song in exact unison with their designs

That sermon is in a strain which I believe has not been heard in this kingdom, in any of the pulpits which are tolerated or encouraged in it, since the year 1648, when a predecessor of Dr. Price, the Reverend Hugh Peters, made the vault of the king's own chapel at St. James's ring with the honour and privilege of the saints, who, with the "high praises of God in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands, were to execute judgment on the heathen, and punishments upon the *people*; to bind their *kings* with chains, and their *nobles* with fetters of iron."* Few harangues from the pulpit, except in the days of your league in France, or in the days of our solemn league and covenant in England, have ever breathed less of the spirit of moderation than this lecture in the Old Jewry. Supposing, however, that something like moderation were visible in this political sermon; yet politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character, to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind.

This pulpit style, revived after so long a discontinuance, had to me the air of novelty, and of a novelty not wholly without danger. I do not charge this danger equally to every part of the discourse. The hint given to a noble and reverend lay-divine, who is supposed high in office in one of our universities,† and other lay-divines "of *rank* and literature," may be proper and seasonable, though somewhat new. If the noble *Seekers* should find nothing to satisfy their pious fancies in the old staple of the national church, or in all the rich variety to be found in the well-assorted warehouses of the dissenting congregations, Dr. Price advises them to improve upon non-conformity; and to set up, each of them, a separate meeting-house upon his own particular principles.* It is somewhat remarkable that this reverend divine should be so earnest for setting up new churches, and so perfectly indifferent concerning the doctrine which may be taught in them. His zeal is of a curious character. It is not for the propagation of his own opinions, but of any opinions. It is not for the diffusion of truth, but for the spreading of contradiction. Let the noble teachers but dissent, it is no matter from whom or from what. This great point once secured, it is taken for granted their religion will be rational and manly. I doubt whether religion would reap all the benefit which the calculating divine computes from this "great company of great preachers." It would certainly be a valuable addition of nondescripts to the ample collection of known classes, genera and species, which at present beautify the *hortus siccus* of dissent. A sermon from a noble duke, or a noble marquis, or a noble earl, or baron bold, would certainly increase and diversify the amusements of this town, which begins to grow satiated with the uniform round of its vapid dissipations. I should only stipulate that these new *Mess Johns* in robes and coronets should keep some sort of bounds in the democratic and levelling principles which are expected from their titled pulpits. The new evangelists will, I dare say, disappoint the hopes that are conceived of them. They will not become, literally as well as figuratively, polemic divines, nor be disposed so to drill their congregations; that they may, as in former blessed times, preach their doctrines to regiments of dragoons, and corps of infantry and artillery. Such arrangements, however favourable to the cause of compulsory freedom, civil and religious, may not be equally conducive to the national tranquillity. These few restrictions I hope are no great stretches of intolerance, no very violent exertions of despotism.

But I may say of our preacher, "*utinam nugis tota illa dedisset tempora sævitiæ.*"—All things in this his fulminating bull are not of so innoxious a tendency. His doctrines affect our constitution in its vital parts. He tells the revolution society, in this political sermon, that

* Psalm cxlix.

† Discourse on the Love of our Country, Nov. 4, 1789, by Dr. Richard Price, 3d edition, p. 17 and 18.

* "Those who dislike that mode of worship which is prescribed by public authority, ought, if they can find *no* worship *out* of the church which they approve, *to set up a separate worship for themselves;* and by doing this, and giving an example of a rational and manly worship, men of *weight* from their *rank* and literature may do the greatest service to society and the world." P. 18, Dr. Price's Sermon.

his majesty "is almost the *only* lawful king in the world, because the *only* one who owes his crown to *the choice of his people*." As to the kings of *the world*, all of whom (except one) this arch pontiff of the *rights of men*, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervour of the twelfth century, puts into one sweeping clause of ban and anathema, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude, over the whole globe, it behoves them to consider how they admit into their territories these apostolic missionaries, who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful kings. That is their concern. It is ours as a domestic interest of some moment, seriously to consider the solidity of the *only* principle upon which these gentlemen acknowledge a king of Great Britain to be entitled to their allegiance.

This doctrine, as applied to the prince now on the British throne, either is nonsense, and therefore neither true nor false, or it affirms a most unfounded, dangerous, illegal, and unconstitutional position. According to this spiritual doctor of politics, if his majesty does not owe his crown to the choice of his people, he is no *lawful king*. Now nothing can be more untrue than that the crown of this kingdom is so held by his majesty. Therefore if you follow their rule, the king of Great Britain, who most certainly does not owe his high office to any form of popular election, is in no respect better than the rest of the gang of usurpers, who reign, or rather rob, all over the face of this our miserable world, without any sort of right or title to the allegiance of their people. The policy of this general doctrine, so qualified, is evident enough. The propagators of this political gospel are in hopes their abstract principle (their principle that a popular choice is necessary to the legal existence of the sovereign magistracy) would be overlooked, whilst the king of Great Britain was not affected by it. In the mean time the ears of their congregations would be gradually habituated to it, as if it were a first principle admitted without dispute. For the present it would only operate as a theory, pickled in the preserving juices of pulpit eloquence, and laid by for future use. *Condo et compono quæ mox depromere possim.* By this policy, whilst our government is soothed with a reservation in its favour, to which it has no claim, the security, which it has in common with all governments, so far as opinion is security, is taken away.

Thus these politicians proceed, whilst little notice is taken of their doctrines; but when they come to be examined upon the plain meaning of their words, and the direct tendency of their doctrines, then equivocations and slippery constructions come into play. When they say the king owes his crown to the choice of his people, and is therefore the only lawful sovereign in the world, they will perhaps tell us they mean to say no more than that some of the king's predecessors have been called to the throne by some sort of choice; and therefore he owes his crown to the choice of his people. Thus, by a miserable subterfuge, they hope to render their proposition safe, by rendering it nugatory. They are welcome to the asylum they seek for their offence, since they take refuge in their folly. For, if you admit this interpretation, how does their idea of election differ from our idea of inheritance? And how does the settlement of the crown in the Brunswick line derived from James the first, come to legalize our monarchy, rather than that of any of the neighbouring countries? At some time or other, to be sure, all the beginners of dynasties were chosen by those who called them to govern. There is ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were at a remote period, elective, with more or fewer limitations in the objects of choice; but whatever kings might have been here or elsewhere, a thousand years ago, or in whatever manner the ruling dynasties of England or France may have begun, the king of Great Britain is at this day king by a fixed rule of succession, according to the laws of his country: and whilst the legal conditions of the compact of sovereignty are performed by him (as they are performed) he holds his crown in contempt of the choice of the revolution society, who have not a single vote for a king among them, either individually or collectively; though I make no doubt they would soon erect themselves into an electoral college, if things were ripe to give effect to their claim. His majesty's heirs and successors, each in his time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his majesty has succeeded to that he wears.

Whatever may be the success of evasion, in explaining away the gross errour of *fact*, which supposes that his majesty (though he holds it in concurrence with the wishes) owes his crown to the choice of his people, yet nothing can evade their full explicit declaration, concerning the principle of a right in the people to choose, which right is directly maintained, and tenaciously adhered to. All the oblique insinuations concerning election bottom in this proposition, and are referable to it.

Lest the foundation of the king's exclusive legal title should pass for a mere rant of adulatory freedom, the political divine proceeds dogmatically to assert,* that by the principles of the revolution the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights, all of which, with him, compose one system, and lie together in one short sentence; namely, that we have acquired a right

1. "To choose our own governours."
2. "To cashier them for misconduct."
3. "To frame a government for ourselves."

This new, and hitherto unheard-of bill of rights, though made in the name of the whole people, belongs to those gentlemen and their faction only. The body of the people of England have no share in it. They utterly disclaim it. They will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes. They are bound to do so by the laws of their country, made at the time of that very revolution, which is appealed to in favour of the fictitious rights claimed by the society which abuses its name.

These gentlemen of the Old Jewry, in all their reasonings on the revolution of 1688, have a revolution which happened in England about forty years before, and the late French revolution, so much before their eyes, and in their hearts, that they are constantly confounding all the three together. It is necessary that we should separate what they confound. We must recall their erring fancies to the *acts* of the revolution which we revere, for the discovery of its true *principles*. If the *principles* of the revolution of 1688 are any where to be found, it is in the statute called the *Declaration of Right*. In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts, not one word is said, nor one suggestion made, of a general right "to choose our own *governours*; to cashier them for misconduct; and to *form* a government for *ourselves*."

This declaration of right (the act of the 1st of William and Mary, sess. 2. ch. 2.) is the corner-stone of our constitution, as reinforced, explained, improved, and in its fundamental principles for ever settled. It is called "An act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for *settling* the *succession* of the crown." You will observe, that these rights and this succession are declared in one body and bound indissolubly together.

* P. 34, Discourse on the Love of our Country, by Dr. Price.

A few years after this period, a second opportunity offered for asserting a right of election to the crown. On the prospect of a total failure of issue from king William, and from the princess, afterwards queen Anne, the consideration of the settlement of the crown, and of a further security for the liberties of the people, again came before the legislature. Did they this second time make any provision for legalising the crown on the spurious revolution principles of the Old Jewry? No. They followed the principles which prevailed in the declaration of right; indicating with more precision the persons who were to inherit in the protestant line. This act also incorporated, by the same policy, our liberties, and our hereditary succession in the same act. Instead of a right to choose our own governours, they declared that the *succession* in that line (the protestant line drawn from James the first) was absolutely necessary "for the peace, quiet, and security of the realm," and that it was equally urgent on them "to maintain a *certainty in the succession* thereof, to which the subjects may safely have recourse for their protection." Both these acts, in which are heard the unerring, unambiguous oracles of revolution policy, instead of countenancing the delusive, gipsey predictions of a "right to choose our governours," prove to a demonstration how totally adverse the wisdom of the nation was from turning a case of necessity into a rule of law.

Unquestionably there was at the revolution, in the person of king William, a small and a temporary deviation from the strict order of a regular hereditary succession; but it is against all genuine principles of jurisprudence to draw a principle from a law made in a special case, and regarding an individual person. *Privilegium non transit in exemplum.* If ever there was a time favourable for establishing the principle, that a king of popular choice was the only legal king, without all doubt it was at the revolution. Its not being done at that time is a proof that the nation was of opinion it ought not to be done at any time. There is no person so completely ignorant of our history, as not to know, that the majority in parliament of both parties were so little disposed to any thing resembling that principle, that at first they were determined to place the vacant crown, not on the head of the prince of Orange, but on that of his wife Mary, daughter of king James, the eldest born of the issue of that king, which they acknowledged as undoubtedly his. It would be to repeat a very trite story, to recall to your memory all those circumstances which demonstrated that their accepting king William was

not properly a *choice*; but to all those who did not wish, in effect, to recall king James, or to deluge their country in blood, and again to bring their religion, laws, and liberties into the peril they had just escaped, it was an act of *necessity*, in the strictest moral sense in which necessity can be taken.

In the very act, in which for a time, and in a single case, parliament departed from the strict order of inheritance, in favour of a prince, who, though not next, was however very near in the line of succession, it is curious to observe how Lord Somers, who drew the bill called the Declaration of Right, has comported himself on that delicate occasion. It is curious to observe with what address this temporary solution of continuity is kept from the eye; whilst all that could be found in this act of necessity to countenance the idea of an hereditary succession is brought forward, and fostered, and made the most of, by this great man, and by the legislature who followed him. Quitting the dry, imperative style of an act of parliament, he makes the lords and commons fall to a pious, legislative ejaculation, and declare, that they consider it "as a marvellous providence, and merciful goodness of God to this nation, to preserve their said majesties' *royal* persons, most happily to reign over us *on the throne of their ancestors*, for which, from the bottom of their hearts, they return their humblest thanks and praises."—The legislature plainly had in view the act of recognition of the first of queen Elizabeth, chap. 3d, and of that of James the first, chap. 1st, both acts strongly declaratory of the inheritable nature of the crown, and in many parts they follow, with a nearly literal precision, the words and even the form of thanksgiving, which is found in these old declaratory statutes.

The two houses, in the act of king William, did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to assert a right to choose their own governours, much less to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown. Their having been in condition to avoid the very appearance of it, as much as possible, was by them considered as a providential escape. They threw a politic, well-wrought veil over every circumstance tending to weaken the rights, which in the meliorated order of succession they meant to perpetuate; or which might furnish a precedent for any future departure from what they had then settled for ever. Accordingly, that they might not relax the nerves of their monarchy, and that they might preserve a close conformity to the practice of their ancestors, as it appeared in the declaratory statutes of queen Mary * and queen Elizabeth, in the next clause they vest, by recognition, in their majesties, *all* the legal prerogatives of the crown, declaring, "that in them they are most *fully*, rightfully, and *intirely* invested, incorporated, united, and annexed." In the clause which follows, for preventing questions, by reason of any pretended titles to the crown, they declare (observing also in this the traditionary language, along with the traditionary policy of the nation, and repeating as from a rubric the language of the preceding acts of Elizabeth and James) that on the preserving "a *certainty* in the SUCCESSION thereof, the unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation doth, under God, wholly depend."

They knew that a doubtful title of succession would but too much resemble an election; and that an election would be utterly destructive of the "unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation," which they thought to be considerations of some moment. To provide for these objects, and therefore to exclude for ever the Old Jewry doctrine of "a right to choose our own governours," they follow with a clause, containing a most solemn pledge, taken from the preceding act of queen Elizabeth, as solemn a pledge as ever was or can be given in favour of an hereditary succession, and as solemn a renunciation as could be made of the principles by this society imputed to them. "The Lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of all the people aforesaid, most humbly and faithfully submit *themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever*; and do faithfully promise, that they will stand to, maintain, and defend their said majesties, and also the *limitation of the crown*, herein specified and contained, to the utmost of their powers," &c. &c.

So far is it from being true, that we acquired a right by the revolution to elect our kings, that if we had possessed it before, the English nation did at that time most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves, and for all their posterity for ever. These gentlemen may value themselves as much as they please on their whig principles; but I never desire to be thought a better whig than Lord Somers; or to understand the principles of the revolution better than those by whom it was brought about; or to read in the declaration of right any mysteries unknown to those whose penetrating style has engraved in our ordinances, and in our hearts, the words and spirit of that immortal law.

It is true that, aided with the powers derived

* 1st Mary, sess. 3. ch. 1.

from force and opportunity, the nation was at that time, in some sense, free to take what course it pleased for filling the throne; but only free to do so upon the same grounds on which they might have wholly abolished their monarchy, and every other part of their constitution. However, they did not think such bold changes within their commission. It is indeed difficult, perhaps impossible, to give limits to the mere *abstract* competence of the supreme power, such as was exercised by parliament at that time; but the limits of a *moral* competence, subjecting, even in powers more indisputably sovereign, occasional will to permanent reason, and to the steady maxims of faith, justice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding upon those who exercise any authority, under any name, or under any title, in the state. The house of lords, for instance, is not morally competent to dissolve the house of commons; no, nor even to dissolve itself, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion in the legislature of the kingdom. Though a king may abdicate for his own person, he cannot abdicate for the monarchy. By as strong, or by a stronger reason, the house of commons cannot renounce its share of authority. The engagement and pact of society, which generally goes by the name of the constitution, forbids such invasion and such surrender. The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who derive any serious interest under their engagements, as much as the whole state is bound to keep its faith with separate communities. Otherwise competence and power would soon be confounded, and no law be left but the will of a prevailing force. On this principle the succession of the crown has always been what it now is, an hereditary succession by law: in the old line it was a succession by the common law; in the new by the statute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the substance, but regulating the mode, and describing the persons. Both these descriptions of law are of the same force, and are derived from an equal authority, emanating from the common agreement and original compact of the state, *communi sponsione reipublicæ*, and as such are equally binding on king, and people too, as long as the terms are observed, and they continue the same body politic.

It is far from impossible to reconcile, if we do not suffer ourselves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphysic sophistry, the use both of a fixed rule and an occasional deviation; the sacredness of an hereditary principle of succession in our government, with a power of change in its application in cases of extreme emergency. Even in that extremity (if we take the measure of our rights by our exercise of them at the revolution) the change is to be confined to the peccant part only; to the part which produced the necessary deviation; and even then it is to be effected without a decomposition of the whole civil and political mass, for the purpose of originating a new civil order out of the first elements of society.

A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation. without such means it might even risk the loss of that part of the constitution which it wished the most religiously to preserve. The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the restoration and revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both these periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their ancient edifice; they did not, however, dissolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both cases they regenerated the deficient part of the whole constitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept these old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be suited to them. They acted by the ancient organized states in the shape of their old organization, and not by the organic *molecule* of a disbanded people. At no time, perhaps, did the sovereign legislature manifest a more tender regard to that fundamental principle of British constitutional policy, than at the time of the revolution, when it deviated from the direct line of hereditary succession. The crown was carried somewhat out of the line in which it had before moved; but the new line was derived from the same stock. It was still a line of hereditary descent; still an hereditary descent in the same blood, though an hereditary descent qualified with protestantism. When the legislature altered the direction, but kept the principle, they shewed that they held it inviolable.

On this principle, the law of inheritance had admitted some amendment in the old time, and long before the æra of the revolution. Some time after the conquest great questions arose upon the legal principles of hereditary descent. It became a matter of doubt, whether the heir *per capita* or the heir *per stirpes* was to succeed; but whether the heir *per capita* gave way when the heirdom *per stirpes* took place, or the catholic heir when the protestant was preferred, the inheritable principle survived with a sort of immortality through all

transmigrations—*multosque per annos stat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum.* This is the spirit of our constitution, not only in its settled course, but in all its revolutions. Whoever came in, or however he came in, whether he obtained the crown by law, or by force, the hereditary succession was either continued or adopted.

The gentlemen of the society for revolutions see nothing in that of 1688 but the deviation from the constitution; and they take the deviation from the principle for the principle. They have little regard to the obvious consequences of their doctrine, though they may see, that it leaves positive authority in very few of the positive institutions of this country. When such an unwarrantable maxim is once established, that no throne is lawful but the elective, no one act of the princes who preceded this æra of fictitious election can be valid. Do these theorists mean to imitate some of their predecessors, who dragged the bodies of our ancient sovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs? Do they mean to attaint and disable backwards all the kings that have reigned before the revolution, and consequently to stain the throne of England with the blot of a continual usurpation? Do they mean to invalidate, annul, or to call into question, together with the titles of the whole line of our kings, that great body of our statute law which passed under those whom they treat as usurpers? to annul laws of inestimable value to our liberties—of as great value at least as any which have passed at or since the period of the revolution? If kings who did not owe their crown to the choice of their people, had no title to make laws, what will become of the statute *de tallagio non concedendo?* of the *petition of right?* of the act of *habeas corpus?* Do these new doctors of the rights of men presume to assert, that King James the second, who came to the crown as next of blood, according to the rules of a then unqualified succession, was not to all intents and purposes a lawful king of England, before he had done any of those acts which were justly construed into an abdication of his crown? If he was not, much trouble in parliament might have been saved at the period these gentlemen commemorate. But King James was a bad king with a good title, and not an usurper. The princes who succeeded according to the act of parliament which settled the crown on the electress Sophia and on her descendants, being Protestants, came in as much by a title of inheritance as King James did. He came in according to the law, as it stood at his accession to the crown; and the princes of the house of Brunswick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but by the law, as it stood at their several accessions of Protestant descent and inheritance, as I hope I have shewn sufficiently.

The law by which this royal family is specifically destined to the succession, is the act of the 12th and 13th of King William. The terms of this act bind "us and our *heirs*, and our *posterity*, to them, their *heirs*, and their *posterity*," being Protestants, to the end of time, in the same words as the declaration of right had bound us to the heirs of King William and Queen Mary. It therefore secures both an hereditary crown and an hereditary allegiance. On what ground, except the constitutional policy of forming an establishment to secure that kind of succession which is to preclude a choice of the people for ever, could the legislature have fastidiously rejected the fair and abundant choice which our own country presented to them, and searched in strange lands for a foreign princess, from whose womb the line of our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a series of ages?

The Princess Sophia was named in the act of settlement of the 12th and the 13th of King William, for a *stock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power, which she might not, and in fact did not, herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only, because, says the act, "the most excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Dutchess Dowager of Hanover, is *daughter* of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, *daughter* of our late *sovereign Lord* King James the First, of happy memory, and is hereby declared to be the next in *succession* in the Protestant line," &c. &c.; "and the crown shall continue to the *heirs* of her body, being Protestants." This limitation was made by parliament, that through the Princess Sophia an inheritable line, not only was to be continued in future, but (what they thought very material) that through her it was to be connected with the old stock of inheritance in King James the First; in order that the monarchy might preserve an unbroken unity through all ages, and might be preserved (with safety to our religion) in the old approved mode by descent, in which, if our liberties had been once endangered, they had often, through all storms and struggles of prerogative and privilege, been preserved. They did well. Our experience has taught us, that

in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, our liberties can be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*. An irregular, convulsive movement may be necessary to throw off an irregular, convulsive disease. But the course of succession is the healthy habit of the British constitution. Was it that the legislature wanted, at the act for the limitation of the crown in the Hanoverian line, drawn through the female descendants of James the First, a due sense of the inconveniences of having two or three, or possibly more foreigners in succession to the British throne? No!—they had a due sense of the evils which might happen from such foreign rule, and more than a due sense of them. But a more decisive proof cannot be given of the full conviction of the British nation, that the principles of the revolution did not authorize them to elect kings at their pleasure, and without any attention to the ancient fundamental principles of our government, than their continuing to adopt a plan of hereditary Protestant succession in the old line, with all the dangers and all the inconveniences of its being a foreign line full before their eyes, and operating with the utmost force upon their minds.

A few years ago I should be ashamed to overload a matter, so capable of supporting itself, by the then unnecessary support of any argument; but this seditious, unconstitutional doctrine is now publicly taught, avowed, and printed. The dislike I feel to revolutions, the signals for which have so often been given from pulpits; the spirit of change that is gone abroad; the total contempt which prevails with you, and may come to prevail with us, of all ancient institutions, when set in opposition to a present sense of convenience, or to the bent of a present inclination: all these considerations make it not unadvisable, in my opinion, to call back our attention to the true principles of our own domestic laws; that you, my French friend, should begin to know, and that we should continue to cherish them. We ought not, on either side of the water, to suffer ourselves to be imposed upon by the counterfeit wares which some persons, by a double fraud, export to you in illicit bottoms, as raw commodities of British growth, though wholly alien to our soil, in order afterwards to smuggle them back again into this country, manufactured after the newest Paris fashion of an improved liberty.

The people of England will not ape the fashions they have never tried: nor go back to those which they have found mischievous on trial. They look upon the legal hereditary succession of their crown as among their rights, not as among their wrongs; as a benefit, not as a grievance; as a security for their liberty, not as a badge of servitude. They loook on the frame of their commonwealth, *such as it stands*, to be of inestimable value; and they conceive the undisturbed succession of the crown to be a pledge of the stability and perpetuity of all the other members of our constitution.

I shall beg leave, before I go any further, to take notice of some paltry artifices, which the abetters of election, as the only lawful title to the crown, are ready to employ, in order to render the support of the just principles of our constitution a task somewhat invidious. These sophisters substitute a fictitious cause, and feigned personages, in whose favour they suppose you engaged, whenever you defend the inheritable nature of the crown. It is common with them to dispute as if they were in a conflict with some of those exploded fanatics of slavery, who formerly maintained, what I believe no creature now maintains, "that the crown is held by divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right."—These old fanatics of single arbitrary power dogmatized as if hereditary royalty was the only lawful government in the world, just as our new fanatics of popular arbitrary power, maintain that a popular election is the sole lawful source of authority. The old prerogative enthusiasts, it is true, did speculate foolishly, and perhaps impiously too, as if monarchy had more of a divine sanction than any other mode of government; and as if a right to govern by inheritance were in strictness *indefeasible* in every person, who should be found in the succession to a throne, and under every circumstance, which no civil or political right can be. But an absurd opinion concerning the king's hereditary right to the crown does not prejudice one that is rational, and bottomed upon solid principles of law and policy. If all the absurd theories of lawyers and divines were to vitiate the objects in which they are conversant, we should have no law, and no religion, left in the world. But an absurd theory on one side of a question forms no justification for alleging a false fact, or promulgating mischievous maxims on the other.

The second claim of the revolution society is "a right of cashiering their governours for *misconduct*." Perhaps the apprehensions our ancestors entertained of forming such a precedent as that "of cashiering for misconduct," was the cause that the declaration of the act which implied the abdication of King James,

was, if it had any fault, rather too guarded, and too circumstantial.* But all this guard, and all this accumulation of circumstances, serves to shew the spirit of caution which predominated in the national councils, in a situation in which men irritated by oppression, and elevated by a triumph over it, are apt to abandon themselves to violent and extreme courses: it shews the anxiety of the great men who influenced the conduct of affairs at that great event, to make the revolution a parent of settlement, and not a nursery of future revolutions.

No government could stand a moment, if it could be blown down with any thing so loose and indefinite as an opinion of "*misconduct*." They who led at the revolution, grounded their virtual abdication of King James upon no such light and uncertain principle. They charged him with nothing less than a design, confirmed by a multitude of illegal overt acts, to *subvert the Protestant church and state* and their *fundamental*, unquestionable laws and liberties: they charged him with having broken the *original contract* between king and people. This was more than *misconduct*. A grave and overruling necessity obliged them to take the step they took, and took with infinite reluctance, as under that most rigorous of all laws. Their trust for the future preservation of the constitution was not in future revolutions. The grand policy of all their regulations was to render it almost impracticable for any future sovereign to compel the states of the kingdom to have again recourse to those violent remedies. They left the crown what, in the eye and estimation of law, it had ever been, perfectly irresponsible. In order to lighten the crown still further, they aggravated responsibility on ministers of state. By the statute of the first of King William, sess. 2d, called "*the act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession of the crown*," they enacted, that the ministers should serve the crown on the terms of that declaration. They secured soon after the *frequent meetings of parliament*, by which the whole government would be under the constant inspection and active controul of the popular representative and of the magnates of the kingdom. In the next great constitutional act, that of the 12th and 13th of King William, for the further limitation of the crown, and *better* securing the rights and liberties of the subject, they provided, "that no pardon under the great seal of England should be pleadable to an impeachment by the commons in parliament." The rule laid down for government in the declaration of right, the constant inspection of parliament, the practical claim of impeachment, they thought infinitely a better security not only for their constitutional liberty, but against the vices of administration, than the reservation of a right so difficult in the practice, so uncertain in the issue, and often so mischievous in the consequences, as that of "cashiering their governours."

Dr. Price in this sermon,* condemns very properly the practice of gross, adulatory addresses to kings. Instead of this fulsome style, he proposes that his majesty should be told, on occasions of congratulation, that "he is to consider himself as more properly the servant than the sovereign of his people." For a compliment, this new form of address does not seem to be very soothing. Those who are servants, in name, as well as in effect, do not like to be told of their situation, their duty, and their obligations. The slave, in the old play, tells his master, "*Hæc commemoratio est quasi exprobatio.*" It is not pleasant as compliment; it is not wholesome as instruction. After all, if the king were to bring himself to echo this new kind of address, to adopt it in terms, and even to take the appellation of Servant of the People as his royal style, how either he or we should be much mended by it, I cannot imagine. I have seen very assuming letters, signed, Your most obedient, humble servant. The proudest domination that ever was endured on earth took a title of still greater humility than that which is now proposed for sovereigns by the Apostle of Liberty. Kings and nations were trampled upon by the foot of one calling himself "the Servant of Servants;" and mandates for deposing sovereigns were sealed with the signet of "the Fisherman."

I should have considered all this as no more than a sort of flippant vain discourse, in which, as in an unsavoury fume, several persons suffer the spirit of liberty to evaporate, if it were not plainly in support of the idea, and a part of the scheme of "cashiering kings for misconduct." In that light it is worth some observation.

Kings, in one sense, are undoubtedly the

* "That King James the Second, having endeavoured to *subvert the constitution* of the kingdom, by breaking the *original contract* between king and people, and by the advice of jesuits, and other wicked persons, having violated the *fundamental* laws, and *having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom* hath *abdicated* the government, and the throne is thereby *vacant*."

* P. 22, 23, 24.

servants of the people, because their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage; but it is not true that they are, in the ordinary sense (by our constitution, at least) any thing like servants; the essence of whose situation is to obey the commands of some other, and to be removeable at pleasure. But the king of Great Britain obeys no other person; all other persons are individually, and collectively too, under him, and owe to him a legal obedience. The law, which knows neither to flatter nor to insult, calls this high magistrate, not our servant, as this humble Divine calls him, but "*our sovereign Lord the King;*" and we, on our parts, have learned to speak only the primitive language of the law, and not the confused jargon of their Babylonian pulpits.

As he is not to obey us, but as we are to obey the law in him, our constitution has made no sort of provision towards rendering him, as a servant, in any degree responsible. Our constitution knows nothing of a magistrate like the *Justicia* of Arragon; nor of any court legally appointed, nor of any process legally settled for submitting the king to the responsibility belonging to all servants. In this he is not distinguished from the commons and the lords; who, in their several public capacities, can never be called to an account for their conduct; although the revolution society chooses to assert, in direct opposition to one of the wisest and most beautiful parts of our constitution, that "a king is no more than the first servant of the public, created by it, *and responsible to it.*"

Ill would our ancestors at the revolution have deserved their fame for wisdom, if they had found no security for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations, and precarious in its tenure; if they had been able to contrive no better remedy against arbitrary power than civil confusion. Let these gentlemen state who that *representative* public is to whom they will affirm the king, as a servant, to be responsible. It will be then time enough for me to produce to them the positive statute law which affirms that he is not.

The ceremony of cashiering kings, of which these gentlemen talk so much at their ease, can rarely, if ever, be performed without force. It then becomes a case of war, and not of constitution. Laws are commanded to hold their tongues among arms; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold. The revolution of 1688 was obtained by a just war, in the only case in which any war, and much more a civil war, can be just. "Justa bella quibus necessaria." The question of dethroning, or, if these gentlemen like the phrase better, "cashiering kings," will always be, as it has always been, an extraordinary question of state, and wholly out of the law; a question (like all other questions of state) of dispositions, and of means, and of probable consequences, rather than of positive rights. As it was not made for common abuses, so it is not to be agitated by common minds. The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Government must be abused and deranged indeed, before it can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer in extremities this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state. Times and occasions, and provocations, will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case; the irritable from sensibility to oppression; the high-minded from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause: but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.

The third head of right, asserted by the pulpit of the Old Jewry, namely, the "right to form a government for ourselves," has, at least, as little countenance from any thing done at the revolution, either in precedent or principle, as the two first of their claims. The revolution was made to preserve our *ancient* indisputable laws and liberties, and that *ancient* constitution of government which is our *only* security for law and liberty. If you are desirous of knowing the spirit of our constitution, and the policy which predominated in that great period which has secured it to this hour, pray look for both in our histories, in our records, in our acts of parliament, and journals of parliament, and not in the sermons of the Old Jewry, and the after-dinner toasts of the revolution society. In the former you will find other ideas and another language. Such a claim is as ill-suited to our temper and wishes as it is unsupported by any appearance of authority. The very idea of the fabrication of a new government, is enough to fill us with disgust and horrour. We wished at the period of the revolution, and do now wish, to derive

all we possess as *an inheritance from our forefathers*. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformations we have hitherto made, have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority, and example.

Our oldest reformation is that of Magna Charta. You will see that Sir Edward Coke, that great oracle of our law, and indeed all the great men who follow him, to Blackstone,* are industrious to prove the pedigree of our liberties. They endeavour to prove, that the ancient charter, the Magna Charta of king John, was connected with another positive charter from Henry I. and that both the one and the other were nothing more than a reaffirmance of the still more ancient standing law of the kingdom. In the matter of fact, for the greater part, these authors appear to be in the right; perhaps not always: but if the lawyers mistake in some particulars, it proves my position still the more strongly; because it demonstrates the powerful prepossession towards antiquity, with which the minds of all our lawyers and legislators, and of all the people whom they wish to influence, have been always filled; and the stationary policy of this kingdom in considering their most sacred rights and franchises as an *inheritance*.

In the famous law of the 3d of Charles I. called the *Petition of Right*, the parliament says to the king, "Your subjects have *inherited* this freedom," claiming their franchises not on abstract principles "as the rights of men," but as the rights of Englishmen, and as a patrimony derived from their forefathers. Selden, and the other profoundly learned men, who drew this petition of right, were as well acquainted, at least, with all the general theories concerning the "rights of men," as any of the discourses in our pulpits, or on your tribune; full as well as Dr. Price, or as the Abbé Sieyes. But, for reasons worthy of that practical wisdom which superseded their theoretic science, they preferred this positive, recorded, *hereditary* title to all which can be dear to the man and the citizen, to that vague speculative right, which exposed their sure inheritance to be scrambled for and torn to pieces by every wild litigious spirit.

The same policy pervades all the laws which have since been made for the preservation of our liberties. In the 1st of William and Mary, in the famous statute, called the Declaration of Right, the two houses utter not a syllable of "a right to frame a government for themselves." You will see, that their whole care was to secure the religion, laws, and liberties, that had been long possessed, and had been lately endangered. "Taking into their most serious consideration the *best* means for making such an establishment, that their religion, laws, and liberties, might not be in danger of being again subverted,"* they auspicate all their proceedings, by stating as some of those *best* means, "in the first place" to do "as their *ancestors in like cases have usually* done for vindicating their *ancient* rights and liberties, to *declare*;"—and then they pray the king and queen, "that it may be *declared* and enacted, that *all and singular* the rights and liberties *asserted and declared* are the true *ancient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom."

You will observe, that from magna charta to the declaration of right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

The policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit

* See Blackstone's Magna Charta, printed at Oxford, 1759.

* 1 W. and M.

our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down, to us and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenour of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small benefits, from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an impesing and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits; its monumental inscriptions; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men; on account of their age; and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce any thing better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

You might, if you pleased, have profited of our example, and have given to your recovered freedom a correspondent dignity. Your privileges, though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your constitution, it is true, whilst you were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation; but you possessed in some parts the walls, and in all the foundations of a noble and venerable castle. You might have repaired those walls; you might have built on those old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected; but you had the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished. In your old state you possessed that variety of parts corresponding with the various descriptions of which your community was happily composed; you had all that combination, and all that opposition of interests, you had that action and counteraction which, in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of discordant powers, draws out the harmony of the universe. These opposed and conflicting interests, which you considered as so great a blemish in your old and in our present constitution, interpose a salutary check to all precipitate resolutions. They render deliberation a matter not of choice, but of necessity; they make all change a subject of *compromise*, which naturally begets moderation; they produce *temperaments*, preventing the sore evil of harsh, crude, unqualified reformations; and rendering all the headlong exertions of arbitrary power, in the few or in the many, for ever impracticable. Through that diversity of members and interests, general liberty had as many securities as there were separate views in the several orders; whilst, by pressing down the whole by the weight of a real monarchy, the separate parts would have been prevented from warping and starting from their allotted places.

You had all these advantages in your ancient states; but you chose to act as if you had never been moulded into civil society, and had every thing to begin anew. You began ill, because you began by despising every thing that belonged to you. You set up your trade without a capital. If the last generations of your country appeared without much lustre in your eyes, you might have passed them by,

and derived your claims from a more early race of ancestors. Under a pious predilection for those ancestors, your imaginations would have realized in them a standard of virtue and wisdom, beyond the vulgar practice of the hour: and you would have risen with the example to whose imitation you aspired. Respecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to respect yourselves. You would not have chosen to consider the French as a people of yesterday, as a nation of low-born servile wretches until the emancipating year of 1789. In order to furnish, at the expense of your honour, an excuse to your apologists here for several enormities of yours, you would not have been content to be represented as a gang of Maroon slaves, suddenly broke loose from the house of bondage, and therefore to be pardoned for your abuse of the liberty to which you were not accustomed, and were ill fitted. Would it not, my worthy friend, have been wiser to have you thought, what I, for one, always thought you, a generous and gallant nation, long misled to your disadvantage by your high and romantic sentiments of fidelity, honour, and loyalty; that events had been unfavourable to you, but that you were not enslaved through any illiberal or servile disposition; that in your most devoted submission, you were actuated by a principle of public spirit, and that it was your country you worshipped, in the person of your king? Had you made it to be understood, that in the delusion of this amiable errour you had gone further than your wise ancestors; that you were resolved to resume your ancient privileges, whilst you preserved the spirit of your ancient and your recent loyalty and honour; or, if diffident of yourselves, and not clearly discerning the almost obliterated constitution of your ancestors, you had looked to your neighbours in this land, who had kept alive the ancient principles and models of the old common law of Europe, meliorated and adapted to its present state—by following wise examples you would have given new examples of wisdom to the world. You would have rendered the cause of liberty venerable in the eyes of every worthy mind in every nation. You would have shamed despotism from the earth, by shewing that freedom was not only reconcileable, but as, when well disciplined, it is, auxiliary to law. You would have had an unoppressive but a productive revenue. You would have had a flourishing commerce to feed it. You would have had a free constitution; a potent monarchy; a disciplined army; a reformed and venerated clergy; a mitigated but spirited nobility, to lead your virtue, not to overlay it; you would have had a liberal order of commons, to emulate and to recruit that nobility; you would have had a protected, satisfied, laborious, and obedient people, taught to seek and to recognize the happiness that is to be found by virtue in all conditions; in which consists the true moral equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous fiction, which, by inspiring false ideas and vain expectations into men destined to travel in the obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to aggravate and imbitter that real inequality, which it never can remove; and which the order of civil life establishes as much for the benefit of those whom it must leave in an humble state, as those whom it is able to exalt to a condition more splendid, but not more happy. You had a smooth and easy career of felicity and glory laid open to you, beyond any thing recorded in the history of the world; but you have shewn that difficulty is good for man.

Compute your gains: see what is got by those extravagant and presumptuous speculations which have taught your leaders to despise all their predecessors, and all their contemporaries, and even to despise themselves, until the moment in which they became truly despicable. By following those false lights, France has bought undisguised calamities at a higher price than any nation has purchased the most unequivocal blessings! France has bought poverty by crime! France has not sacrificed her virtue to her interest; but she has abandoned her interest, that she might prostitute her virtue. All other nations have begun the fabric of a new government, or the reformation of an old, by establishing originally, or by enforcing with greater exactness some rites or other of religion. All other people have laid the foundations of civil freedom in severer manners, and a system of a more austere and masculine morality. France, when she let loose the reigns of regal authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious dissoluteness in manners, and of an insolent irreligion in opinions and practices; and has extended through all ranks of life, as if she were communicating some privilege, or laying open some secluded benefit, all the unhappy corruptions that usually were the disease of wealth and power. This is one of the new principles of equality in France.

France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has utterly disgraced the tone of lenient council in the cabinets of princes, and disarmed it of its most potent topics. She has sanctified the dark suspicious maxims of tyrannous distrust; and taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter be called) the delusive plausibilities, of

moral politicians. Sovereigns will consider those who advise them to place an unlimited confidence in their people, as subverters of their thrones; as traitors who aim at their destruction, by leading their easy good-nature, under specious pretences, to admit combinations of bold and faithless men into a participation of their power. This alone (if there were nothing else) is an irreparable calamity to you and to mankind. Remember that your parliament of Paris told your king, that in calling the states together, he had nothing to fear but the prodigal excess of their zeal in providing for the support of the throne. It is right that these men should hide their heads. It is right that they should bear their part in the ruin which their counsel has brought on their sovereign and their country. Such sanguine declarations tend to lull authority asleep; to encourage it rashly to engage in perilous adventures of untried policy; to neglect those provisions, preparations and precautions, which distinguish benevolence from imbecility; and without which no man can answer for the salutary effect of any abstract plan of government or of freedom. For want of these, they have seen the medicine of the state corrupted into its poison. They have seen the French rebel against a mild and lawful monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than ever any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant. Their resistance was made to concession; their revolt was from protection; their blow was aimed at a hand holding out graces, favours, and immunities.

This was unnatural. The rest is in order. They have found their punishment in their success. Laws overturned; tribunals subverted; industry without vigour; commerce expiring; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoverished; a church pillaged, and a state not relieved; civil and military anarchy made the constitution of the kingdom; every thing human and divine sacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the consequence; and to crown all, the paper securities of new, precarious, tottering power, the discredited paper securities of impoverished fraud, and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the support of an empire, in lieu of the two great recognized species that represent the lasting conventional credit of mankind, which disappeared and hid themselves in the earth from whence they came, when the principle of property, whose creatures and representatives they are, was systematically subverted.

Were all these dreadful things necessary? were they the inevitable results of the desperate struggle of determined patriots, compelled to wade through blood and tumult, to the quiet shore of a tranquil and prosperous liberty? No! nothing like it. The fresh ruins of France, which shock our feelings wherever we can turn our eyes, are not the devastation of civil war; they are the sad but instructive monuments of rash and ignorant counsel in time of profound peace. They are the display of inconsiderate and presumptuous, because unresisted and irresistible authority. The persons who have thus squandered away the precious treasure of their crimes, the persons who have made this prodigal and wild waste of public evils (the last stake reserved for the ultimate ransom of the state) have met in their progress with little, or rather with no opposition at all. Their whole march was more like a triumphal procession than the progress of a war. Their pioneers have gone before them, and demolished and laid every thing level at their feet. Not one drop of *their* blood have they shed in the cause of the country they have ruined. They have made no sacrifice to their projects of greater consequence than their shoe-buckles, whilst they were imprisoning their king, murdering their fellow-citizens, and bathing in tears, and plunging in poverty and distress, thousands of worthy men and worthy families. Their cruelty has not even been the base result of fear. It has been the effect of their sense of perfect safety, in authorizing treasons, robberies, rapes, assassinations, slaughters, and burnings, throughout their harassed land. But the cause of all was plain from the beginning.

This unforced choice, this fond election of evil, would appear perfectly unaccountable, if we did not consider the composition of the national assembly: I do not mean its formal constitution, which as it now stands is exceptionable enough, but the materials of which, in a great measure, it is composed, which is of ten thousand times greater consequence than all the formalities in the world. If we were to know nothing of this assembly but by its title and function, no colours could paint to the imagination any thing more venerable. In that light the mind of an inquirer, subdued by such an awful image as that of the virtue and wisdom of a whole people collected into one focus, would pause and hesitate in condemning things even of the very worst aspect. Instead of blameable, they would appear only mysterious. But no name, no power, no function, no artificial institution whatsoever, can make the men of whom any system of authority is composed, any other than God,

and nature, and education, and their habits of life have made them. Capacities beyond these the people have not to give. Virtue and wisdom may be the objects of their choice; but their choice confers neither the one nor the other on those upon whom they lay their ordaining hands. They have not the engagement of nature, they have not the promise of revelation for any such powers.

After I had read over the list of the persons and descriptions elected into the *Tiers Etat*, nothing which they afterwards did could appear astonishing. Among them, indeed, I saw some of known rank; some of shining talents; but of any practical experience in the state, not one man was to be found. The best were only men of theory. But whatever the distinguished few may have been, it is the substance and mass of the body which constitutes its character, and must finally determine its direction. In all bodies, those who will lead, must also, in a considerable degree, follow. They must conform their propositions to the taste, talent, and disposition of those whom they wish to conduct: therefore, if an assembly is viciously or feebly composed in a very great part of it, nothing but such a supreme degree of virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reason cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents disseminated through it from becoming only the expert instruments of absurd projects! If, what is the more likely event, instead of that unusual degree of virtue, they should be actuated by sinister ambition, and a lust of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the assembly, to whom at first they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and instrument of their designs. In this political traffic the leaders will be obliged to bow to the ignorance of their followers, and the followers to become subservient to the worst designs of their leaders.

To secure any degree of sobriety in the propositions made by the leaders in any public assembly, they ought to respect, in some degree perhaps to fear, those whom they conduct. To be led any otherwise than blindly, the followers must be qualified, if not for actors, at least for judges; they must also be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can secure a steady and moderate conduct in such assemblies, but that the body of them should be respectably composed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of such habits as enlarge and liberalise the understanding.

In the calling of the states general of France, the first thing that struck me, was a great departure from the ancient course. I found the representation for the third estate composed of six hundred persons. They were equal in number to the representatives of both the other orders. If the orders were to act separately, the number would not, beyond the consideration of the expense, be of much moment. But when it became apparent that the three orders were to be melted down into one, the policy and necessary effect of this numerous representation became obvious. A very small desertion from either of the other two orders must throw the power of both into the hands of the third. In fact, the whole power of the state was soon resolved into that body. Its due composition became therefore of infinitely the greater importance.

Judge, Sir, of my surprise, when I found that a very great proportion of the assembly (a majority, I believe, of the members who attended) was composed of practitioners in the law. It was composed, not of distinguished magistrates, who had given pledges to their country of their science, prudence, and integrity; not of leading advocates, the glory of the bar; not of renowned professors in universities; but for the far greater part, as it must in such a number, of the inferiour, unlearned, mechanical, merely instrumental members of the profession. There were distinguished exceptions; but the general composition was of obscure provincial advocates, of stewards of petty local jurisdictions, country attornies, notaries, and the whole train of the ministers of municipal litigation, the fomenters and conductors of the petty war of village vexation. From the moment I read the list, I saw distinctly, and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow.

The degree of estimation in which any profession is held becomes the standard of the estimation in which the professors hold themselves. Whatever the personal merits of many individual lawyers might have been, and in many it was undoubtedly very considerable, in that military kingdom no part of the profession had been much regarded, except the highest of all, who often united to their professional offices great family splendour, and were invested with great power and authority. These certainly were highly respected, and even with no small degree of awe. The next rank was not much esteemed; the mechanical part was in a very low degree of repute.

Whenever the supreme authority is vested in a body so composed, it must evidently produce the consequences of supreme authority

placed in the hands of men not taught habitually to respect themselves; who had no previous fortune in character at stake; who could not be expected to bear with moderation, or to conduct with discretion, a power, which they themselves, more than any others, must be surprised to find in their hands. Who could flatter himself that these men, suddenly, and, as it were, by enchantment, snatched from the humblest rank of subordination, would not be intoxicated with their unprepared greatness? Who could conceive, that men, who are habitually meddling, daring, subtle, active, of litigious dispositions and unquiet minds, would easily fall back into their old condition of obscure contention, and laborious, low, and unprofitable chicane? Who could doubt but that, at any expense to the state, of which they understood nothing, they must pursue their private interests, which they understood but too well? It was not an event depending on chance or contingency. It was inevitable; it was necessary; it was planted in the nature of things. They must *join* (if their capacity did not permit them to *lead*) in any project which could procure to them a *litigious constitution;* which could lay open to them those innumerable lucrative jobs which follow in the train of all great convulsions and revolutions in the state, and particularly in all great and violent permutations of property. Was it to be expected that they would attend to the stability of property, whose existence had always depended upon whatever rendered property questionable, ambiguous, and insecure? Their objects would be enlarged with their elevation, but their disposition and habits, and mode of accomplishing their designs, must remain the same.

Well! but these men were to be tempered and restrained by other descriptions, of more sober minds, and more enlarged understandings. Were they then to be awed by the super-eminent authority and awful dignity of a handful of country-clowns, who have seats in that assembly, some of whom are said not to be able to read and write? and by not a greater number of traders, who, though somewhat more instructed, and more conspicuous in the order of society, had never known any thing beyond their counting-house? No! both these descriptions were more formed to be overborne and swayed by the intrigues and artifices of lawyers, than to become their counterpoise. With such a dangerous disproportion, the whole must needs be governed by them. To the faculty of law was joined a pretty considerable proportion of the faculty of medicine. This faculty had not, any more than that of the law, possessed in France its just estimation. Its professors, therefore, must have the qualities of men not habituated to sentiments of dignity. But supposing they had ranked as they ought to do, and as with us they do actually, the sides of sickbeds are not the academies for forming statesmen and legislators. Then came the dealers in stocks and funds, who must be eager, at any expense, to change their ideal paper wealth for the more solid substance of land. To these were joined men of other descriptions, from whom as little knowledge of or attention to the interests of a great state was to be expected, and as little regard to the stability of any institution; men formed to be instruments not controuls. Such in general was the composition of the *Tiers Etat* in the national assembly; in which was scarcely to be perceived the slightest traces of what we call the natural landed interest of the country.

We know that the British house of commons, without shutting its doors to any merit in any class, is, by the sure operation of adequate causes, filled with every thing illustrious in rank, in descent, in hereditary and in acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval, and politic distinction, that the country can afford. But supposing, what hardly can be supposed as a case, that the house of commons should be composed in the same manner with the *Tiers Etat* in France, would this dominion of chicane be borne with patience, or even conceived without horror? God forbid I should insinuate anything derogatory to that profession, which is another priesthood, administering the rights of sacred justice. But whilst I revere men in the functions which belong to them, and would do, as much as one man can do, to prevent their exclusion from any, I cannot, to flatter them, give the lie to nature. They are good and useful in the composition; they must be mischievous if they preponderate so as virtually to become the whole. Their very excellence in their peculiar functions may be far from a qualification for others. It cannot escape observation, that when men are too much confined to professional and faculty habits, and, as it were, inveterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather disabled than qualified for whatever depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehensive connected view of the various complicated external and internal interests which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a state.

After all, if the house of commons were to

have an wholly professional and faculty composition, what is the power of the house of commons, circumscribed and shut in by the immovable barriers of law, usages, positive rules of doctrine and practice, counterpoised by the house of lords, and every moment of its existence at the discretion of the crown to continue, prorogue, or dissolve us? The power of the house of commons, direct or indirect, is indeed great; and long may it be able to preserve its greatness, and the spirit belonging to true greatness, at the full; and it will do so, as long as it can keep the breakers of law in India from becoming the makers of law for England. The power, however, of the house of commons, when least diminished, is as a drop of water in the ocean, compared to that residing in a settled majority of your national assembly. That assembly, since the destruction of the orders, has no fundamental law, no strict convention, no respected usage to restrain it. Instead of finding themselves obliged to conform to a fixed constitution, they have a power to make a constitution which shall conform to their designs. Nothing in heaven or upon earth can serve as a controul on them. What ought to be the heads, the hearts, the dispositions, that are qualified, or that dare, not only to make laws under a fixed constitution, but at one heat to strike out a totally new constitution for a great kingdom, and in every part of it, from the monarch on the throne to the vestry of a parish? But—"*fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*" In such a state of unbounded power, for undefined and undefinable purposes, the evil of a moral and almost physical inaptitude of the man to the function, must be the greatest we can conceive to happen in the management of human affairs.

Having considered the composition of the third estate as it stood in its original frame, I took a view of the representatives of the clergy. There too it appeared, that full as little regard was had to the general security of property, or to the aptitude of the deputies for their public purposes, in the principles of their election. That election was so contrived, as to send a very large proportion of mere country curates to the great and arduous work of new-modelling a state; men who never had seen the state so much as in a picture; men who knew nothing of the world beyond the bounds of an obscure village; who, immersed in hopeless poverty, could regard all property, whether secular or ecclesiastical, with no other eye than that of envy; among whom must be many, who, for the smallest hope of the meanest dividend in plunder, would readily join in any attempts upon a body of wealth, in which they could hardly look to have any share, except in a general scramble. Instead of balancing the power of the active chicaners in the other assembly, these curates must necessarily become the active coadjutors, or at best the passive instruments of those by whom they have been habitually guided in their petty village concerns. They too could hardly be the most consciencious of their kind, who, presuming upon their incompetent understanding, could intrigue for a trust which led them from their natural relation to their flocks, and their natural spheres of action, to undertake the regeneration of kingdoms. This preponderating weight being added to the force of the body of chicane in the *Tiers Etat*, completed that momentum of ignorance, rashness, presumption, and lust of plunder, which nothing has been able to resist.

To observing men it must have appeared from the beginning, that the majority of the Third Estate, in conjunction with such a deputation from the clergy as I have described, whilst it pursued the destruction of the nobility, would inevitably become subservient to the worst designs of individuals in that class. In the spoil and humiliation of their own order these individuals would possess a sure fund for the pay of their new followers. To squander away the objects which made the happiness of their fellows, would be to them no sacrifice at all. Turbulent, discontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with personal pride and arrogance, generally despise their own order. One of the first symptoms they discover of a selfish and mischievous ambition, is a profligate disregard of a dignity which they partake with others. To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind. The interest of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it; and as none but bad men would justify it in abuse, none but traitors would barter it away for their own personal advantage.

There were, in the time of our civil troubles in England, (I do not know whether you have any such in your assembly in France,) several persons, like the then Earl of Holland, who by themselves or their families had brought an odium on the throne, by the prodigal dispensation of its bounties towards them, who afterwards joined in the rebellions arising from the discontents of which they were themselves the

cause; men who helped to subvert that throne to which they owed, some of them, their existence, others all that power which they employed to ruin their benefactor. If any bounds are set to the rapacious demands of that sort of people, or that others are permitted to partake in the objects they would engross, revenge and envy soon fill up the craving void that is left in their avarice. Confounded by the complication of distempered passions, their reason is disturbed; their views become vast and perplexed; to others inexplicable; to themselves uncertain. They find, on all sides, bounds to their unprincipled ambition in any fixed order of things. But in the fog and haze of confusion all is enlarged, and appears without any limit.

When men of rank sacrifice all ideas of dignity to an ambition without a distinct object, and work with low instruments and for low ends, the whole composition becomes low and base. Does not something like this now appear in France? Does it not produce something ignoble and inglorious? a kind of meanness in all the prevalent policy? a tendency in all that is done to lower along with individuals all the dignity and importance of the state? Other revolutions have been conducted by persons, who whilst they attempted or affected changes in the commonwealth, sanctified their ambition by advancing the dignity of the people whose peace they troubled. They had long views. They aimed at the rule, not at the destruction of their country. They were men of great civil, and great military talents, and if the terrour, the ornament of their age. They were not like Jew brokers contending with each other who could best remedy with fraudulent circulation and depreciated paper the wretchedness and ruin brought on their country by their degenerate councils. The compliment made to one of the great bad men of the old stamp (Cromwell) by his kinsman, a favourite poet of that time, shews what it was he proposed, and what indeed to a great degree he accomplished in the success of his ambition:

"Still as *you* rise, the *state* exalted too,
"Finds no distemper whilst 'tis chang'd by *you*;
"Chang'd like the world's great scene, when without noise
"The rising sun night's *vulgar* lights destroys."

These disturbers were not so much like men usurping power, as asserting their natural place in society. Their rising was to illuminate and beautify the world. Their conquest over their competitors was by outshining them. The hand that, like a destroying angel, smote the country, communicated to it the force and energy under which it suffered. I do not say (God forbid) I do not say, that the virtues of such men were to be taken as a balance to their crimes; but they were some corrective to their effects. Such was, as I said, our Cromwell. Such were your whole race of Guises, Condés, and Colignis. Such the Richelieu, who in more quiet times acted in the spirit of a civil war. Such, as better men, and in a less dubious cause, were your Henry the Fourth and your Sully, though nursed in civil confusions, and not wholly without some of their taint. It is a thing to be wondered at, to see how very soon France, when she had a moment to respire, recovered and emerged from the longest and most dreadful civil war that ever was known in any nation. Why? Because, among all their massacres, they had not slain the *mind* in their country. A conscious dignity, a noble pride, a generous sense of glory and emulation, was not extinguished. On the contrary, it was kindled and inflamed. The organs also of the state, however shattered, existed. All the prizes of honour and virtue, all the rewards, all the distinctions, remained. But your present confusion, like a palsy, has attacked the fountain of life itself. Every person in your country, in a situation to be actuated by a principle of honour, is disgraced and degraded, and can entertain no sensation of life, except in a mortified and humiliated indignation. But this generation will quickly pass away. The next generation of the nobility will resemble the artificers and clowns, and money-jobbers, usurers, and Jews, who will be always their fellows, sometimes their masters. Believe me, Sir, those who attempt to level, never equalise. In all societies, consisting of various descriptions of citizens, some description must be uppermost. The levellers therefore only change and pervert the natural order of things; they load the edifice of society, by setting up in the air what the solidity of the structure requires to be on the ground. The associations of tailors and carpenters, of which the republic (of Paris, for instance) is composed, cannot be equal to the situation, into which, by the worst of usurpations, an usurpation on the prerogatives of nature, you attempt to force them.

The chancellor of France at the opening of the states, said, in a tone of oratorical flourish, that all occupations were honourable. If he meant only, that no honest employment was disgraceful, he would not have gone beyond the truth. But in asserting, that any thing is honourable, we imply some distinction in its

favour. The occupation of a hair-dresser, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honour to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more servile employments. Such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression from the state; but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted to rule. In this you think you are combating prejudice, but you are at war with nature.*

I do not, my dear Sir, conceive you to be of that sophistical captious spirit, or of that uncandid dulness, as to require, for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of the correctives and exceptions, which reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from reasonable men. You do not imagine, that I wish to confine power, authority, and distinction to blood, and names, and titles. No, Sir. There is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever state, condition, profession or trade, the passport of Heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity every thing formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country too, that passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid, mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Every thing ought to be open; but not indifferently to every man. No rotation; no appointment by lot; no mode of election operating in the spirit of sortition or rotation, can be generally good in a government conversant in extensive objects. Because they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to select the man with a view to the duty, or to accommodate the one to the other. I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be opened through virtue, let it be remembered too, that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle.

Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state, that does not represent its ability, as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert and timid, it never can be safe from the invasions of ability, unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be represented too in great masses of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected. The characteristic essence of property, formed out of the combined principles of its acquisition and conservation, is to be *unequal*. The great masses therefore which excite envy, and tempt rapacity, must be put out of the possibility of danger. Then they form a natural rampart about the lesser properties in all their gradations. The same quantity of property, which is by the natural course of things divided among many, has not the same operation. Its defensive power is weakened as it is diffused. In this diffusion each man's portion is less than what, in the eagerness of his desires, he may flatter himself to obtain by dissipating the accumulations of others. The plunder of the few would indeed give but a share inconceivably small in the distribution to the many. But the many are not capable of making this calculation; and those who lead them to rapine, never intend this distribution.

The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the most valuable and interesting circumstances belonging to it, and that which tends the most to the perpetuation of society itself. It makes our weakness subservient to our virtue; it grafts benevolence even upon avarice. The possessors of family wealth, and of the distinction which attends hereditary possession (as most concerned in it) are the natural securities for this transmission. With us, the house of peers is formed upon this principle. It is wholly composed of hereditary property and hereditary distinction;

* Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxxviii. verse 24, 25. "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure: and he that hath little business shall become wise."—"How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad; that driveth oxen; and is occupied in their labours; and whose talk is of bullocks?"

Ver. 27. "So every carpenter and workmaster that laboureth night and day," &c.

Ver. 33. "They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation: they shall not sit on the judges' seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment: they cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken."

Ver. 34. "But they will maintain the state of the world."

I do not determine whether this book be canonical, as the Gallican church (till lately) has considered it, or apocrypha, as here it is taken. I am sure it contains a great deal of sense, and truth.

and made therefore the third of the legislature; and in the last event, the sole judge of all property in all its subdivisions. The house of commons too, though not necessarily, yet in fact, is always so composed in the far greater part. Let those large proprietors be what they will, and they have their chance of being among the best, they are at the very worst, the ballast in the vessel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolized by creeping sycophants, and the blind abject admirers of power, they are too rashly slighted in shallow speculations of the petulant, assuming, short-sighted coxcombs of philosophy. Some decent regulated pre-eminence, some preference (not exclusive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjust, nor impolitic.

It is said, that twenty-four millions ought to prevail over two hundred thousand. True; if the constitution of a kingdom be a problem of arithmetic. This sort of discourse does well enough with the lamp-post for its second: to men who *may* reason calmly, it is ridiculous. The will of the many, and their interest, must very often differ; and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice. A government of five hundred country attornies and obscure curates is not good for twenty-four millions of men, though it were chosen by eight and forty millions; nor is it the better for being guided by a dozen of persons of quality, who have betrayed their trust in order to obtain that power. At present, you seem in every thing to have strayed out of the high road of nature. The property of France does not govern it. Of course property is destroyed, and rational liberty has no existence. All you have got for the present is a paper circulation, and a stock jobbing constitution: and as to the future, do you seriously think that the territory of France, upon the republican system of eighty-three independent municipalities (to say nothing of the parts that compose them) can ever be governed as one body, or can ever be set in motion by the impulse of one mind? When the national assembly has completed its work, it will have accomplished its ruin. These commonwealths will not long bear a state of subjection to the republic of Paris. They will not bear that this one body should monopolize the captivity of the king, and the dominion over the assembly calling itself national. Each will keep its own portion of the spoil of the church to itself; and it will not suffer either that spoil, or the more just fruits of their industry, or the natural produce of their soil, to be sent to swell the insolence, or pamper the luxury, of the mechanics of Paris. In this they will see none of the equality, under the pretence of which they have been tempted to throw off their allegiance to their sovereign, as well as the ancient constitution of their country. There can be no capital city in such a constitution as they have lately made. They have forgot, that when they framed democratic governments, they had virtually dismembered their country. The person whom they persevere in calling king, has not power left to him by the hundredth part sufficient to hold together this collection of republics. The republic of Paris will endeavour indeed to complete the debauchery of the army, and illegally to perpetuate the assembly, without resort to its constituents, as the means of continuing its despotism. It will make efforts, by becoming the heart of a boundless paper circulation, to draw every thing to itself; but in vain. All this policy in the end will appear as feeble as it is now violent.

If this be your actual situation, compared to the situation to which you were called, as it were by the voice of God and man, I cannot find it in my heart to congratulate you on the choice you have made, or the success which has attended your endeavours. I can as little recommend to any other nation a conduct grounded on such principles, and productive of such effects. That I must leave to those who can see further into your affairs than I am able to do, and who best know how far your actions are favourable to their designs. The gentlemen of the revolution society, who were so early in their congratulations, appear to be strongly of opinion that there is some scheme of politics relative to this country, in which your proceedings may, in some way, be useful. For your Dr. Price, who seems to have speculated himself into no small degree of fervour upon this subject, addresses his auditors in the following very remarkable words: "I cannot conclude without recalling *particularly* to your recollection a consideration which I have *more than once alluded to*, and which probably your thoughts have *been all along anticipating*, a consideration with which my *mind is impressed more than I can express*. I mean the consideration of the *favourableness of the present times to all exertions in the cause of liberty*."

It is plain that the mind of this *political* preacher was at the time big with some extraordinary design; and it is very probable that the thoughts of his audience, who understood him better than I do, did all along

run before him in his reflection, and in the whole train of consequences to which it led.

Before I read that sermon, I really thought I had lived in a free country; and it was an errour I cherished, because it gave me a greater liking to the country I lived in. I was indeed aware, that a jealous, ever-waking vigilance, to guard the treasure of our liberty, not only from invasion, but from decay and corruption, was our best wisdom and our first duty. However, I considered that treasure rather as a possession to be secured than as a prize to be contended for. I did not discern how the present time came to be so very favourable to all *exertions* in the cause of freedom. The present time differs from any other only by the circumstance of what is doing in France. If the example of that nation is to have an influence on this, I can easily conceive why some of their proceedings which have an unpleasant aspect, and are not quite reconcileable to humanity, generosity, good faith, and justice, are palliated with so much milky good-nature towards the actors, and borne with so much heroic fortitude towards the sufferers. It is certainly not prudent to discredit the authority of an example we mean to follow. But allowing this, we are led to a very natural question;—What is that cause of liberty, and what are those exertions in its favour, to which the example of France is so singularly auspicious? Is our monarchy to be annihilated, with all the laws, all the tribunals, and all the ancient corporations of the kingdom? Is every landmark of the country to be done away in favour of a geometrical and arithmetical constitution? Is the house of lords to be voted useless? Is episcopacy to be abolished? Are the church lands to be sold to Jews and jobbers; or given to bribe new invented municipal republics into a participation in sacrilege? Are all the taxes to be voted grievances, and the revenue reduced to a patriotic contribution, or patriotic presents? Are silver shoe-buckles to be substituted in the place of the land tax and the malt tax, for the support of the naval strength of this kingdom? Are all orders, ranks, and distinctions to be confounded, that out of universal anarchy, joined to national bankruptcy, three or four thousand democracies should be formed into eighty-three, and that they may all, by some sort of unknown attractive power, be organized into one? For this great end is the army to be seduced from its discipline and its fidelity, first by every kind of debauchery, and then by the terrible precedent of a donative in the increase of pay? Are the curates to be seduced from their bishops, by holding out to them the delusive hope of a dole out of the spoils of their own order? Are the citizens of London to be drawn from their allegiance by feeding them at the expense of their fellow-subjects? Is a compulsory paper currency to be substituted in the place of the legal coin of this kingdom? Is what remains of the plundered stock of public revenue to be employed in the wild project of maintaining two armies to watch over and to fight with each other? If these are the ends and means of the revolution society, I admit they are well assorted; and France may furnish them for both with precedents in point.

I see that your example is held out to shame us. I know that we are supposed a dull sluggish race, rendered passive by finding our situation tolerable, and prevented by a mediocrity of freedom from ever attaining to its full perfection. Your leaders in France began by affecting to admire, almost to adore, the British constitution; but, as they advanced, they came to look upon it with a sovereign contempt. The friends of your national assembly among us have full as mean an opinion of what was formerly thought the glory of their country. The revolution society has discovered that the English nation is not free. They are convinced that the inequality in our representation is a "defect in our constitution *so gross and palpable*, as to make it excellent chiefly in *form* and *theory*."* That a representation in the legislature of a kingdom is not only the basis of all constitutional liberty in it, but of "*all legitimate government*; that without it a *government* is nothing but an *usurpation*;"—that "when the representation is *partial*, the kingdom possesses liberty only *partially*; and if extremely partial, it gives only a *semblance*; and if not only extremely partial, but corruptly chosen, it becomes a *nuisance*." Dr. Price considers this inadequacy of representation as our *fundamental grievance*; and though, as to the corruption of this semblance of representation, he hopes it is not yet arrived to its full perfection of depravity; he fears that "nothing will be done towards gaining for us this *essential blessing*, until some *great abuse of power* again provokes our resentment, or some *great calamity* again alarms our fears, or perhaps till the acquisition of a *pure and equal representation by other countries*, whilst we are *mocked* with the *shadow*, kindles our shame." To this he subjoins a note in these words. "A representation chosen chiefly by the treasury, and

* Discourse on the Love of our Country, 3d edit. p. 39.

a *few* thousand of the *dregs* of the people, who are generally paid for their votes."

You will smile here at the consistency of those democratists, who, when they are not on their guard, treat the humbler part of the community with the greatest contempt, whilst, at the same time, they pretend to make them the depositories of all power. It would require a long discourse to point out to you the many fallacies that lurk in the generality and equivocal nature of the terms "inadequate representation." I shall only say here, in justice to that old fashioned constitution, under which we have long prospered, that our representation has been found perfectly adequate to all the purposes for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised. I defy the enemies of our constitution to shew the contrary. To detail the particulars in which it is found so well to promote its ends, would demand a treatise on our practical constitution. I state here the doctrine of the revolutionists, only that you and others may see, what an opinion these gentlemen entertain of the constitution of their country, and why they seem to think that some great abuse of power, or some great calamity, as giving a chance for the blessings of a constitution according to their ideas, would be much palliated to their feelings; you see *why they* are so much enamoured of your fair and equal representation, which being once obtained, the same effects might follow. You see they consider our house of commons as only "a semblance," "a form," "a theory," "a shadow," "a mockery," perhaps "a nuisance."

These gentlemen value themselves on being systematic; and not without reason. They must therefore look on this gross and palpable defect of representation, this fundamental grievance (so they call it) as a thing not only vicious in itself, but as rendering our whole government absolutely *illegitimate*, and not at all better than a downright *usurpation*. Another revolution to get rid of this illegitimate and usurped government, would of course be perfectly justifiable, if not absolutely necessary. Indeed their principle, if you observe it with any attention, goes much further than to an alteration in the election of the house of commons; for, if popular representation, or choice, is necessary to the *legitimacy* of all government, the house of lords is, at one stroke, bastardized and corrupted in blood. That house is no representative of the people at all, even in "semblance or in form." The case of the crown is altogether as bad. In vain the crown may endeavour to screen itself against these gentlemen by the authority of the establishment made on the revolution. The revolution which is resorted to for a title, on their system, wants a title itself. The revolution is built, according to their theory, upon a basis not more solid than our present formalities, as it was made by a house of lords not representing any one but themselves; and by a house of commons exactly such as the present, that is, as they term it, by a mere "shadow and mockery" of representation.

Something they must destroy, or they seem to themselves to exist for no purpose. One set is for destroying the civil power through the ecclesiastical; another for demolishing the ecclesiastic through the civil. They are aware that the worst consequences might happen to the public in accomplishing this double ruin of church and state; but they are so heated with their theories, that they give more than hints, that this ruin, with all the mischiefs that must lead to it and attend it, and which to themselves appear quite certain, would not be unacceptable to them, or very remote from their wishes. A man among them of great authority, and certainly of great talents, speaking of a supposed alliance between church and state, says, "perhaps *we must wait for the fall of the civil powers* before this most unnatural alliance be broken. Calamitous no doubt will that time be. But what convulsion in the political world ought to be a subject of lamentation, if it be attended with so desirable an effect?" You see with what a steady eye these gentlemen are prepared to view the greatest calamities which can befall their country!

It is no wonder therefore, that with these ideas of every thing in their constitution and government at home, either in church or state, as illegitimate and usurped, or at best as a vain mockery, they look abroad with an eager and passionate enthusiasm. Whilst they are possessed by these notions, it is vain to talk to them of the practice of their ancestors, the fundamental laws of their country, the fixed form of a constitution, whose merits are confirmed by the solid test of long experience, and an increasing public strength and national prosperity. They despise experience as the wisdom of unlettered men; and as for the rest, they have wrought under-ground a mine that will blow up at one grand explosion all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and acts of parliament. They have "the rights of men." Against these there can be no prescription; against these no argument is binding: these admit no temperament, and no compromise: any thing withheld from their full demand is so much of fraud and injustice.

Against these their rights of men let no government look for security in the length of its continuance, or in the justice and lenity of its administration. The objections of these speculatists, if its forms do not quadrate with their theories, are as valid against such an old and beneficent government as against the most violent tyranny, or the greenest usurpation. They are always at issue with governments, not on a question of abuse, but a question of competency, and a question of title. I have nothing to say to the clumsy subtilty of their political metaphysics. Let them be their amusement in the schools.—"Illa *se jactat in aula—Æolus, et clauso ventorum carcere regnet.*"—But let them not break prison to burst like a *Levanter*, to sweep the earth with their hurricane, and to break up the fountains of the great deep to overwhelm us.

Far am I from denying in theory; full as far is my heart from withholding in practice (if I were of power to give or to withhold) the *real* rights of men. In denying their false claims of right, I do not mean to injure those which are real, and are such as their pretended rights would totally destroy. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence; and law itself is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to do justice; as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their industry; and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to it, as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint stock; and as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be among the direct original rights of man in civil society; for I have in my contemplation the civil social man, and no other. It is a thing to be settled by convention.

If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislature, judicial, or executory power, are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? Rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governour. He inclusively, in a great measure abandons the right of self-defence, the first law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining, what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.

Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exist in total independence of it; and exist in much greater clearness, and in a much greater degree of abstract perfection: but their abstract perfection is their practical defect. By having a right to every thing they want every thing. Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human *wants*. Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil society, of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controuled, and their passions brought into subjection. This can only be done *by a power out of themselves;* and not, in the exercise of its function, subject to that will and to those passions which it is its office to bridle and subdue. In this sense the restraints on men as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the restrictions vary with times and circumstances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be settled upon any abstract rule; and nothing is so foolish as to discuss them upon that principle.

The moment you abate any thing from the

full rights of men, each to govern himself, and suffer any artificial positive limitation upon those rights, from that moment the whole organization of government becomes a consideration of convenience. This it is which makes the constitution of a state, and the due distribution of its powers, a matter of the most delicate and complicated skill. It requires a deep knowledge of human nature and human necessities, and of the things which facilitate or obstruct the various ends which are to be pursued by the mechanism of civil institutions. The state is to have recruits to its strength, and remedies to its distempers. What is the use of discussing a man's abstract right to food or medicine? The question is upon the method of procuring and administering them. In that deliberation I shall always advise to call in the aid of the farmer and the physician, rather than the professor of metaphysics.

The science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught *à priori*. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science; because the real effects of moral causes are not always immediate; but that which in the first instance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may arise even from the ill effects it produces in the beginning. The reverse also happens; and very plausible schemes, with very pleasing commencements, have often shameful and lamentable conclusions. In states there are often some obscure and almost latent causes, things which appear at first view of little moment, on which a very great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend. The science of government being therefore so practical in itself, and intended for such practical purposes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any person can gain in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice, which has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purposes of society, or on building it up again, without having models and patterns of approved utility before his eyes.

These metaphysic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line. Indeed in the gross and complicated mass of human passions and concerns, the primitive rights of men undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity: and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs. When I hear the simplicity of contrivance aimed at and boasted of in any new political constitutions, I am at no loss to decide that the artificers are grossly ignorant of their trade, or totally negligent of their duty. The simple governments are fundamentally defective, to say no worse of them. If you were to contemplate society in but one point of view, all these simple modes of polity are infinitely captivating. In effect each would answer its single end much more perfectly than the more complex is able to attain all its complex purposes. But it is better that the whole should be imperfectly and anomalously answered, than that, while some parts are provided for with great exactness, others might be totally neglected, or perhaps materially injured, by the over-care of a favourite member.

The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes; and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false. The rights of men are in a sort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a computing principle; adding, substracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denominations.

By these theorists the right of the people is almost always sophistically confounded with their power. The body of the community, whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual resistance; but till power and right are the same, the whole body of them has no right inconsistent with virtue, and the first of all virtues, prudence. Men have no right to what is not reasonable, and to what is not for their benefit; for though a pleasant writer said, *Liceat, perire poetis*, when one of them, in cold blood, is said to have leaped into the flames of a volcanic revolution, *Ardentem frigidus Ætnam insiluit*, I consider such a frolic rather as an unjustifiable poetic licence, than as one of the franchises of Parnassus; and whether he were poet or divine, or politician, that chose to exercise this kind of right, I think that more wise, because more chari-

table thoughts would urge me rather to save the man, than to preserve his brazen slippers as the monuments of his folly.

The kind of anniversary sermons to which a great part of what I write refers, if men are not shamed out of their present course, in commemorating the fact, will cheat many out of the principles, and deprive them of the benefits of the revolution they commemorate. I confess to you, Sir, I never liked this continual talk of resistance and resolution, or the practice of making the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread. It renders the habit of society dangerously valetudinary: it is taking periodical doses of mercury sublimate, and swallowing down repeated provocatives of cantharides to our love of liberty.

This distemper of remedy, grown habitual, relaxes and wears out, by a vulgar and prostituted use, the spring of that spirit which is to be exerted on great occasions. It was in the most patient period of Roman servitude that themes of tyrannicide made the ordinary exercise of boys at school—*cum perimit saevos classis numerosa tyrannos*. In the ordinary state of things, it produces in a country like ours the worst effects, even on the cause of that liberty which it abuses with the dissoluteness of an extravagant speculation. Almost all the high-bred republicans of my time have, after a short space, become the most decided, thorough-paced courtiers; they soon left the business of a tedious, moderate, but practical resistance, to those of us whom, in the pride and intoxication of their theories, they have slighted as not much better than tories. Hypocrisy, of course, delights in the most sublime speculations; for, never intending to go beyond speculation, it costs nothing to have it magnificent. But even in cases where rather levity than fraud was to be suspected in these ranting speculations, the issue has been much the same. These professors, finding their extreme principles not applicable to cases which call only for a qualified, or, as I may say, civil, and legal resistance, in such cases employ no resistance at all. It is with them a war or a revolution, or it is nothing. Finding their schemes of politics not adapted to the state of the world in which they live, they often come to think lightly of all public principle; and are ready, on their part, to abandon for a very trivial interest what they find of very trivial value. Some indeed are of more steady and persevering natures; but those are eager politicians out of parliament, who have little to tempt them to abandon their favourite projects. They have some change in the church or state, or both, constantly in their view. When that is the case, they are always bad citizens, and perfectly unsure connections. For, considering their speculative designs as of infinite value, and the actual arrangement of the state as of no estimation, they are at best indifferent about it. They see no merit in the good, and no fault in the vicious management of public affairs; they rather rejoice in the latter, as more propitious to revolution. They see no merit or demerit in any man, or any action, or any political principle, any further than as they may forward or retard their design of change: they therefore take up, one day, the most violent and stretched prerogative, and another time the wildest democratic ideas of freedom, and pass from the one to the other without any sort of regard to cause, to person, or to party.

In France you are now in the crisis of a revolution, and in the transit from one form of government to another—you cannot see that character of men exactly in the same situation in which we see it in this country. With us it is militant; with you it is triumphant; and you know how it can act when its power is commensurate to its will. I would not be supposed to confine those observations to any description of men, or to comprehend all men of any description within them—No! far from it. I am as incapable of that injustice, as I am of keeping terms with those who profess principles of extremes; and who, under the name of religion, teach little else than wild and dangerous politics. The worst of these politics of revolution is this: they temper and harden the breast, in order to prepare it for the desperate strokes which are sometimes used in extreme occasions. But as these occasions may never arrive, the mind receives a gratuitous taint; and the moral sentiments suffer not a little, when no political purpose is served by the depravation. This sort of people are so taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgot his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the understanding, they have succeeded in stopping up those that lead to the heart. They have perverted in themselves, and in those that attend to them, all the well-placed sympathies of the human breast.

This famous sermon of the Old Jewry breathes nothing but this spirit through all the political part. Plots, massacres, assassinations, seem to some people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodless reformation, a guiltless liberty, appear flat and vapid to their taste. There must be a great

change of scene; there must be a magnificent stage effect; there must be a grand spectacle to rouse the imagination, grown torpid with the lazy enjoyment of sixty years security, and the still unanimating repose of public prosperity. The preacher found them all in the French revolution. This inspires a juvenile warmth through his whole frame. His enthusiasm kindles as he advances; and when he arrives at his peroration, it is in a full blaze. Then viewing, from the Pisgah of his pulpit, the free, moral, happy, flourishing, and glorious state of France, as in a bird-eye landscape of a promised land, he breaks out into the following rapture:

"What an eventful period is this! I am *thankful* that I have lived to it; I could almost say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*—I have lived to see a *diffusion* of knowledge, which has undermined superstition and errour.—I have lived to see *the rights of men* better understood than ever; and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it.—I have lived to see *thirty millions of people*, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice. *Their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.*"*

Before I proceed further, I have to remark, that Dr. Price seems rather to overvalue the great acquisitions of light which he has obtained and diffused in this age. The last century appears to me to have been quite as much enlightened. It had, though in a different place, a triumph as memorable as that of Dr. Price; and some of the great preachers of that period partook of it as eagerly as he has done in the triumph of France. On the trial of the Rev. Hugh Peters for high treason, it was deposed, that when King Charles was brought to London for his trial, the Apostle of Liberty in that day conducted the *triumph*. "I saw," says the witness, "his majesty in the coach with six horses, and Peters riding before the king *triumphing*.' Dr. Price, when he talks as if he had made a discovery, only follows a precedent; for, after the commencement of the king's trial, this precursor, the same Dr. Peters, concluding a long prayer at the royal chapel at Whitehall, (he had very triumphantly chosen his place,) said, "I have prayed and preached these twenty years; and now I may say with old Simeon, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*"* Peters had not the fruit of his prayer; for he neither departed so soon as he wished, nor in peace. He became (what I heartily hope none of his followers may be in this country) himself a sacrifice to the triumph which he led as pontiff. They dealt at the restoration, perhaps, too hardly with this poor good man. But we owe it to his memory and his sufferings, that he had as much illumination, and as much zeal, and had as effectually undermined all *the superstition and error* which might impede the great business he was engaged in, as any who follow and repeat after him, in this age, which would assume to itself an exclusive title to the knowledge of the rights of men, and all the glorious consequences of that knowledge.

After this sally of the preacher of the Old Jewry, which differs only in place and time, but agrees perfectly with the spirit and letter of the rapture of 1648, the revolution society, the fabricators of governments, the heroic band of *cashierers of monarchs*, electors of sovereigns, and leaders of kings in triumph, strutting with a proud consciousness of the diffusion of knowledge, of which every member had obtained so large a share in the donative, were in haste to make a generous diffusion of the knowledge they had thus gratuitously received. To make this bountiful communication, they adjourned from the church in the Old Jewry, to the London Tavern; where the same Dr. Price, in whom the fumes of his oracular tripod were not entirely evaporated, moved and carried the resolution, or address of congratulation, transmitted by Lord Stanhope to the national assembly of France.

I find a preacher of the gospel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called "*nunc dimittis*," made on the first presentation of our Saviour in the temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture to the most horrid, atrocious, and afflicting spectacle that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This "*leading in triumph*," a thing in its best form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our preacher with such unhallowed transports, must shock, I believe, the moral taste of every well-born mind. Several English were

* Another of these reverend gentlemen, who was witness to some of the spectacles which Paris has lately exhibited, expresses himself thus:—"*A king dragged in submissive triumph by his conquering subjects* is one of those appearances of grandeur which seldom rise in the prospect of human affairs, and which, during the remainder of my life, I shall think of with wonder and gratification." These gentlemen agree marvellously in their feelings.

* State Trials, vol. ii. p. 360, 362.

the stupified and indignant spectators of that triumph. It was (unless we have been strangely deceived) a spectacle more resembling a procession of American savages, entering into Onondaga, after some of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with scalps, their captives overpowered with the scoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themselves, much more than it resembled the triumphal pomp of a civilized martial nation;—if a civilized nation, or any men who had a sense of generosity, were capable of a personal triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

This, my dear Sir, was not the triumph of France. I must believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with shame and horrour. I must believe that the national assembly find themselves in a state of the greatest humiliation in not being able to punish the authors of this triumph, or the actors in it; and that they are in a situation in which any inquiry they may make upon the subject, must be destitute even of the appearance of liberty or impartiality. The apology of that assembly is found in their situation; but when we approve what they *must* bear, it is in us the degenerate choice of a vitiated mind.

With a compelled appearance of deliberation, they vote under the dominion of a stern necessity. They fit in the heart, as it were, of a foreign republic: they have their residence in a city whose constitution has emanated neither from the charter of their king, nor from their legislative power. There they are surrounded by an army not raised either by the authority of their crown, or by their command; and which, if they should order to dissolve itself, would instantly dissolve them. There they sit, after a gang of assassins had driven away some hundreds of the members; whilst those who held the same moderate principles, with more patience or better hope, continued every day exposed to outrageous insults and murderous threats. There a majority, sometimes real, sometimes pretended, captive itself, compels a captive king to issue as royal edicts, at third hand, the polluted nonsense of their most licentious and giddy coffee-houses. It is notorious, that all their measures are decided before they are debated. It is beyond doubt, that under the terrour of the bayonet, and the lamp-post, and the torch to their houses, they are obliged to adopt all the crude and desperate measures suggested by clubs composed of a monstrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations. Among these are found persons, in comparison of whom Cataline would be thought scrupulous, and Cethegus a man of sobriety and moderation. Nor is it in these clubs alone that public measures are deformed into monsters. They undergo a previous distortion in academies, intended as so many seminaries for these clubs, which are set up in all the places of public resort. In these meetings of all sorts, every counsel, in proportion as it is daring, and violent, and perfidious, is taken for the mark of superiour genius. Humanity and compassion are ridiculed as the fruits of superstition and ignorance. Tenderness to individuals is considered as treason to the public. Liberty is always to be estimated perfect as property is rendered insecure. Amid assassination, massacre, and confiscation, perpetrated or meditated, they are forming plans for the good order of future society. Embracing in their arms the carcases of base criminals, and promoting their relations on the title of their offences, they drive hundreds of virtuous persons to the same end, by forcing them to subsist by beggary or by crime.

The assembly, their organ, acts before them the farce of deliberation with as little decency as liberty. They act like the comedians of a fair before a riotous audience; they act amid the tumultuous cries of a mixed mob of ferocious men, and of women lost to shame, who, according to their insolent fancies, direct, controul, applaud, explode them; and sometimes mix and take their seats among them; domineering over them with a strange mixture of servile petulance and proud presumptuous authority. As they have inverted order in all things, the gallery is in the place of the house. This assembly, which overthrows kings and kingdoms, has not even the physiognomy and aspect of a grave legislative body—*nec color imperii, nec frons erat ulla senatus*. They have a power given to them, like that of the evil principle, to subvert and destroy; but none to construct, except such machines as may be fitted for further subversion and further destruction.

Who is it that admires, and from the heart is attached to national representative assemblies, but must turn with horrour and disgust from such a profane burlesque, and abominable perversion of that sacred institute? Lovers of monarchy, lovers of republics, must alike abhor it. The members of your assembly must themselves groan under the tyranny of which they have all the shame, none of the direction, and little of the profit. I am sure many of the members who compose even the

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that body must feel as I do, notwithstanding the applauses of the revolution society. Miserable king! miserable assembly! How must that assembly be silently scandalized with those of their members, who could call a day which seemed to blot the sun out of heaven, "*un beau jour*!"* How must they be inwardly indignant at hearing others, who thought fit to declare to them, "that the vessel of the state would fly forward in her course towards regeneration with more speed than ever," from the stiff gale of treason and murder, which preceded our preacher's triumph! What must they have felt, whilst, with outward patience and inward indignation, they heard of the slaughter of innocent gentlemen in their houses, that "the blood spilled was not the most pure?" What must they have felt, when they were besieged by complaints of disorders which shook their country to its foundations, at being compelled coolly to tell the complainants, that they were under the protection of the law, and that they would address the king (the captive king) to cause the laws to be enforced for their protection; when the enslaved ministers of that captive king had formally notified to them, that there were neither law, nor authority, nor power left to protect? What must they have felt at being obliged, as a felicitation on the present new year, to request their captive king to forget the stormy period of the last, on account of the great good which *he* was likely to produce to his people; to the complete attainment of which good they adjourned the practical demonstrations of their loyalty, assuring him of their obedience, when he should no longer possess any authority to command?

This address was made with much good-nature and affection, to be sure. But among the revolutions in France must be reckoned a considerable revolution in their ideas of politeness. In England we are said to learn manners at second-hand from your side of the water, and that we dress our behaviour in the frippery of France. If so, we are still in the old cut; and have not so far conformed to the new Parisian mode of good-breeding, as to think it quite in the most refined strain of delicate compliment (whether in condolence or congratulation) to say, to the most humiliated creature that crawls upon the earth, that great public benefits are derived from the murder of his servants, the attempted assassination of himself and of his wife, and the mortification, disgrace, and degradation, that he has personally suffered. It is a topic of consolation which our ordinary of Newgate would be too humane to use to a criminal at the foot of the gallows. I should have thought that the hangman of Paris, now that he is liberalized by the vote of the national assembly, and is allowed his rank and arms in the herald's college of the rights of men, would be too generous, too gallant a man, too full of the sense of his new dignity, to employ that cutting consolation to any of the persons whom the *less nation* might bring under the administration of his *executive power*.

A man is fallen indeed, when he is thus flattered. The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preserve a galling wakefulness, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to administer the opiate potion of amnesty, powdered with all the ingredients of scorn and contempt, is to hold to his lips, instead of "the balm of hurt minds," the cup of human misery full to the brim, and to force him to drink it to the dregs.

Yielding to reasons, at least as forcible as those which were so delicately urged in the compliment on the new year, the king of France will probably endeavour to forget those events and that compliment. But History, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exercises her awful censure over the proceedings of all sorts of sovereigns, will not forget either those events, or the æra of this liberal refinement in the intercourse of mankind. History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled melancholy repose. From this sleep the queen was first startled by the voice of the centinel at her door, who cried out to her, to save herself by flight—that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the queen, and pierced with a hundred strokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this persecuted woman had but just time to fly almost naked, and through ways unknown to the murderers had escaped to seek refuge at the feet of a king and husband, not secure of his own life for a moment.

This king, to say no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great

* 6th of October, 1789.

and generous people) were then forced to abandon the sanctuary of the most splendid palace in the world, which they left swimming in blood, polluted by massacre, and strewed with scattered limbs and mutilated carcases. Thence they were conducted into the capital of their kingdom. Two had been selected from the unprovoked, unresisted, promiscuous slaughter, which was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who composed the king's body guard. These two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of justice, were cruelly and publicly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great court of the palace. Their heads were stuck upon spears, and led the procession; whilst the royal captives who followed in the train were slowly moved along, amid the horrid yells, and shrilling screams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abused shape of the vilest of women. After they had been made to taste, drop by drop, more than the bitterness of death, in the slow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to six hours, they were, under a guard, composed of those very soldiers who had thus conducted them through this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris, now converted into a Bastile for kings.

Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthusiastic ejaculation?—These Theban and Thracian orgies, acted in France, and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I assure you, kindle prophetic enthusiasm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom; although a saint and apostle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has so completely vanquished all the mean superstitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in an holy temple by a venerable sage, and not long before not worse announced by the voice of angels to the quiet innocence of shepherds.

At first I was at a loss to account for this fit of unguarded transport. I knew, indeed, that the sufferings of monarchs make a delicious repast to some sort of palates. There were reflections which might serve to keep this appetite within some bounds of temperance. But when I took one circumstance into my consideration, I was obliged to confess, that much allowance ought to be made for the society, and that the temptation was too strong for common discretion; I mean, the circumstance of the Io Pæan of the triumph, the animating cry which called "for *all* the BISHOPS to be hanged on the lamp-posts,"* might well have brought forth a burst of enthusiasm on the foreseen consequences of this happy day. I allow to so much enthusiasm some little deviation from prudence. I allow this prophet to break forth into hymns of joy and thanksgiving on an event which appears like the precursor of the Millennium, and the projected fifth monarchy, in the destruction of all church establishments. There was, however, (as in all human affairs there is) in the midst of this joy something to exercise the patience of these worthy gentlemen, and to try the long suffering of their faith. The actual murder of the king and queen, and their child, was wanting to the other auspicious circumstances of this "*beautiful day*." The actual murder of the bishops, though called for by so many holy ejaculations, was also wanting. A group of regicide and sacrilegious slaughter, was indeed boldly sketched, but it was only sketched. It unhappily was left unfinished, in this great history-piece of the massacre of innocents. What hardy pencil of a great master, from the school of the rights of men, will finish it, is to be seen hereafter. The age has not yet the complete benefit of that diffusion of knowledge that has undermined superstition and errour; and the king of France wants another object or two, to consign to oblivion, in consideration of all the good which is to arise from his own sufferings, and the patriotic crimes of an enlightened age.†

* Tous les Eveques a la lanterne.

† It is proper here to refer to a letter written upon this subject by an eye-witness. That eye-witness was one of the most honest, intelligent, and eloquent members of the national assembly, one of the most active and zealous reformers of the state. He was obliged to secede from the assembly; and he afterwards became a voluntary exile, on account of the horrours of this pious triumph, and the dispositions of men, who, profiting of crimes, if not causing them, have taken the lead in public affairs.

Extract of M. de Lally Tollendal's Second Letter to a Friend.

"Parlons du parti que j'ai pris; il est bien justifie dans ma conscience.—Ni cette ville coupable, ni cette assemblee plus coupable encore ne merkoient que je me justifie; mais j'ai a cœur que vous, et les personnes qui pensent comme vous, ne mecondamnent pas.—Ma sante, je vous jure, me rendoit mes fonctions impossibles; mais memme en les mettant de cote il a ete-au-dessus de mes forces de supporter plus longtems l'horreur que me causoit ce sang—ces tetes—cette reine *presque egorges*, ce roi,

Although this work of our new light and knowledge did not go to the length that in all probability it was intended it should be carried; yet I must think that such treatment of any human creatures must be shocking to any but those who are made for accomplishing revolutions. But I cannot stop here. Influenced by the inborn feelings of my nature, and not being illuminated by a single ray of this new-sprung modern light, I confess to you, Sir, that the exalted rank of the persons suffering, and particularly the sex, the beauty, and the amiable qualities of the descendant of so many kings and emperours, with the tender age of royal infants, insensible only through infancy and innocence of the cruel outrages to which their parents were exposed, instead of being a subject of exultation, adds not a little to my sensibility on that most melancholy occasion.

I hear that the august person, who was the principal object of our preacher's triumph, though he supported himself, felt much on that shameful occasion. As a man, it became him to feel for his wife and his children, and the faithful guards of his person, that were massacred in cold blood about him; as a prince it became him to feel for the strange and frightful transformation of his civilized subjects, and to be more grieved for them, than solicitous for himself. It derogates little from his fortitude, while it adds infinitely to the honour of his humanity. I am very sorry to say it, very sorry indeed, that such personages are in a situation in which it is not becoming in us to praise the virtues of the great.

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well) and that she bears all the succeeding days, that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage; that, like her, she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace; and that, if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in,—glittering like the morning star; full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what an heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged

—amene *esclave*,—entrant a Paris, au milieu de ses assassins, et precede des tetes de ses malheureux, gardes—ces perfides janissaires, ces assassins, ces femmes cannibales, ce cri de TOUS LES EVEQUES A LA LANTERNE, dans le moment ou le roi entre, sa capitale avec deux eveques de son conseil dans sa voiture—un *coup de fusil*, que j'ai vu tirer dans un *des carosses de la reine*—M. Bailly appellant cela *un beau jour*—l'assemblee ayant declare froidement le matin, qu'il n'etoit pas de sa dignite d'aller toute entiere environner le roi—M. Mirabeau disant impunement dans cette assemblee que le vaisseau de l'etat, loin d'etre arrete dans sa course, s'elanceroit avec plus de rapidite que jamais vers sa regeneration—M. Barnave, riant avec lui, quand des flots de sang couloient autour de nous—le vertueux Mounier* echappant par miracle a vingt assassins, qui avoient voulu faire de sa tete un trophee de plus: Voila ce qui me fit jurer de ne plus mettre le pied *dans cette caverne d'Antropophages* [the national assembly] ou je n'avois plus de force d'elever la voix, depuis six semaines je l'avois elevee en vain.

"Moi, Mounier, et tous les honnetes gens, ont pense que le dernier effort a faire pour le bien etoit d'en sortir. Aucune idee de crainte ne s'est approchee de moi. Je rougirois de m'en defendre. J'avois encore reçu sur la route de la part de ce peuple, moins coupable que ceux qui l'ont enivre de fureur, des acclamations, et des applaudissements, dont d'autres auroient ete flattes, et qui m'ont fait fremir. C'est a l'indignation, c'est a l'horreur, c'est aux convulsions physiques, qe le seul aspect du sang me fait eprouver que j'ai cede. On brave un seule mort; on la brave plusieurs fois, quand elle peut etre utile. Mais aucune puissance sous le ciel, mais aucune opinion publique ou privee n'ont le droit de me condamner a souffrir inutilement mille supplices par minute, et a perir de desespoir, de rage, au milieu des *triomphes* du crime que je n'ai pu arreter. Ils me proscriront, ils confisqueront mes biens. Je laboureral la terre, et je ne les verrai plus. Voila ma justification. Vous pourrez la lire, la montrer, la laisser copier; tant pis pour ceux qui ne la comprendront pas; ce ne sera alors moi qui auroit eu tort de la leur donner."

This military man had not so good nerves as the peaceable gentleman of the Old Jewry.—See Mons. Mounier's narrative of these transactions; a man also of honour and virtue, and talents, and therefore a fugitive.

* N. B. Mr. Mounier was then speaker of the national assembly. He has since been obliged to live in exile, though one of the firmest asserters of liberty.

to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream, that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone: that of sophisters, œconomists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

This mixed system of opinion and sentiment had its origin in the ancient chivalry; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying state of human affairs, subsisted and influenced through a long succession of generations, even to the time we live in. If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this, which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force, or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave a domination vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners.

But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things, a king is but a man, a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom, as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrours, and by the concern, which each individual may find in them, from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states:—*Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto.* There ought to be a system of manners in every nation which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in order to subvert ancient institutions, has de-

stroyed ancient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *fealty*, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and subjects from the precaution of tyranny, shall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and assassinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power, not standing on its own honour, and the honour of those who are to obey it. Kings will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels from principle.

When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe, undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of our old manners and opinions is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we must presume, that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial.

We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners, and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence, even in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were rather in their causes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to nobility and to priesthood; and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furnishing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.*

* See the fate of Bailly and Condorcet, supposed to be here particularly alluded to. Compare the circumstances of the trial and execution of the former, with this prediction.

If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to own to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures; are themselves but effects, which, at first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principle. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and the spirit of nobility and religion remains, sentiment supplies, and not always ill supplies their place; but if commerce and the arts should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand without these old fundamental principles, what sort of a thing must be a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and at the same time, poor and sordid barbarians, destitute of religion, honour, or manly pride, possessing nothing at present, and hoping for nothing hereafter?

I wish you may not be going fast, and by the shortest cut, to that horrible and disgustful situation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity, in all the proceedings of the assembly and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.

It is not clear, whether in England we learned those grand and decorous principles, and manners, of which considerable traces yet remain, from you, or whether you took them from us. But to you, I think, we trace them best. You seem to me to be—*gentis incunabula nostræ*. France has always more or less influenced manners in England; and when your fountain is choaked up and polluted, the stream will not run long, or not run clear with us, or perhaps with any nation. This gives all Europe, in my opinion, but too close and connected a concern in what is done in France. Excuse me, therefore, if I have dwelt too long on the atrocious spectacle of the sixth of October, 1789, or have given too much scope to the reflections which have arisen in my mind on occasion of the most important of all revolutions, which may be dated from that day, I mean a revolution in sentiments, manners, and moral opinions. As things now stand, with every thing respectable destroyed without us, and an attempt to destroy within us every principle of respect, one is almost forced to apologize for harbouring the common feelings of men.

Why do I feel so differently from the Rev. Dr. Price, and those of his lay flock, who will choose to adopt the sentiments of his discourse?—for this plain reason—because it is *natural* I should; because we are so made as to be affected at such spectacles with melancholy sentiments upon the unstable condition of mortal prosperity, and the tremendous uncertainty of human greatness; because in those natural feelings we learn great lessons; because in events like these our passions instruct our reason; because when kings are hurled from their thrones by the Supreme Director of this great drama, and become the objects of insult to the base, and of pity to the good, we behold such disasters in the moral, as we should behold a miracle in the physical order of things. We are alarmed into reflection; our minds (as it has long since been observed) are purified by terrour and pity; our weak unthinking pride is humbled, under the dispensations of a mysterious wisdom. Some tears might be drawn from me, if such a spectacle were exhibited on the stage. I should be truly ashamed of finding in myself that superficial, theatric sense of painted distress, whilst I could exult over it in real life. With such a perverted mind, I could never venture to shew my face at a tragedy. People would think the tears that Garrick formerly, or that Siddons not long since, have extorted from me, were the tears of hypocrisy; I should know them to be the tears of folly.

Indeed the theatre is a better school of moral sentiments than churches, where the feelings of humanity are thus outraged. Poets who have to deal with an audience not yet graduated in the school of the rights of men, and who must apply themselves to the moral constitution of the heart, would not dare to produce such a triumph as a matter of exultation. There, where men follow their natural impulses, they would not bear the odious maxims of a Machiavelian policy, whether applied to the attainment of monarchial or democratic tyranny. They would reject them on the modern, as they once did on the ancient stage, where they could not bear even the hypothetical proposition of such wickedness in the mouth of a personated tyrant, though suitable to the character he sustained. No theatric audience in Athens would bear what has been borne, in the midst of the real tragedy of this triumphal day; a principal actor weighing, as it were in scales hung in a shop of horrours,—so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage,—and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the advantages. They would not bear to see the crimes of new democracy posted as in a ledger against the crimes of old despotism, and the book-keepers of politics finding democracy still in debt, but by no means unable or unwilling to pay the balance. In the theatre, the first intuitive glance, without any elaborate process of reasoning, would shew, that this method of political computation would justify every extent of crime. They would see, that on these principles, even where the very worst acts were not perpetrated, it was owing rather to the fortune of the conspirators than to their parsimony in the expenditure of treachery and blood. They would soon see, that criminal means once tolerated are soon preferred. They present a shorter cut to the object than through the highway of the moral virtues. Justifying perfidy and murder for public benefit, public benefit would soon become the pretext, and perfidy and murder the end; until rapacity, malice, revenge, and fear more dreadful than revenge, could satiate their insatiable appetites. Such must be the consequences of losing in the splendour of these triumphs of the rights of men, all natural sense of wrong and right.

But the reverend pastor exults in this "leading in triumph," because truly Louis the Sixteenth was an "arbitrary monarch;" that is, in other words, neither more nor less, than because he was Louis the Sixteenth, and because he had the misfortune to be born king of France, with the prerogatives of which, a long line of ancestors, and a long acquiescence of the people, without any act of his, had put him in possession. A misfortune it has indeed turned out to him, that he was born king of France. But misfortune is not crime, nor is indiscretion always the greatest guilt. I shall never think that a prince, the acts of whose whole reign were a series of concessions to his subjects, who was willing to relax his authority, to remit his prerogatives, to call his people to a share of freedom, not known, perhaps not desired by their ancestors; such a prince, though he should be subjected to the common frailties attached to men and to princes, though he should have once thought it necessary to provide force against the desperate designs manifestly carrying on against his person, and the remnants of his authority; though all this should be taken into consideration, I shall be led with great difficulty to think he deserves the cruel and insulting triumph of Paris, and of Dr. Price. I tremble for the cause of liberty, from such an example to kings. I tremble for the cause of humanity, in the unpunished outrages of the most wicked of mankind. But

there are some people of that low and degenerate fashion of mind, that they look up with a sort of complacent awe and admiration to kings, who know to keep firm in their seat, to hold a strict hand over their subjects, to assert their prerogative, and by the awakened vigilance of a severe despotism, to guard against the very first approaches of freedom. Against such as these they never elevate their voice. Deserters from principle, listed with fortune, they never see any good in suffering virtue, nor any crime in prosperous usurpation.

If it could have been made clear to me, that the king and queen of France (those I mean who were such before the triumph) were inexorable and cruel tyrants, that they had formed a deliberate scheme for massacreing the national assembly, (I think I have seen something like the latter insinuated in certain publications.) I should think their captivity just. If this be true, much more ought to have been done, but done, in my opinion, in another manner. The punishment of real tyrants is a noble and awful act of justice; and it has with truth been said to be consolatory to the human mind. But if I were to punish a wicked king, I should regard the dignity in avenging the crime. Justice is grave and decorous, and in its punishments rather seems to submit to a necessity, than to make a choice. Had Nero, or Agrippina, or Louis the Eleventh, or Charles the Ninth, been the subject; if Charles the Twelfth of Sweden after the murder of Patkul, or his predecessor Christina, after the murder of Monaldeschi, had fallen into your hands, Sir, or into mine, I am sure our conduct would have been different.

If the French king, or king of the French, (or by whatever name he is known in the new vocabulary of your constitution,) has in his own person, and that of his queen, really deserved these unavowed but unavenged murderous attempts, and those frequent indignities more cruel than murder, such a person would ill deserve even that subordinate executory trust, which I understand is to be placed in him; nor is he fit to be called chief in a nation which he has outraged and oppressed. A worse choice for such an office in a new commonwealth, than that of a deposed tyrant, could not possibly be made. But to degrade and insult a man as the worst of criminals, and afterwards to trust him in your highest concerns, as a faithful, honest, and zealous servant, is not consistent in reasoning, nor prudent in policy, nor safe in practice. Those who could make such an appointment must be guilty of a more flagrant breach of trust than any they have yet committed against the people. As this is the only crime in which your leading politicians could have acted inconsistently, I conclude that there is no sort of ground for these horrid insinuations. I think no better of all the other calumnies.

In England, we give no credit to them. We are generous enemies: we are faithful allies. We spurn from us with disgust and indignation the slanders of those who bring us their anecdotes with the attestation of the fleur-de-luce on their shoulder. We have Lord George Gordon fast in Newgate; and neither his being a public proselyte to Judaism, nor his having, in his zeal against catholic priests and all sorts of ecclesiastics, raised a mob (excuse the term, it is still in use here) which pulled down all our prisons, have preserved to him a liberty, of which he did not render himself worthy by a virtuous use of it. We have rebuilt Newgate, and tenanted the mansion. We have prisons almost as strong as the Bastile, for those who dare to libel the queens of France. In this spiritual retreat, let the noble libeller remain. Let him there meditate on his Talmud, until he learns a conduct more becoming his birth and parts, and not so disgraceful to the ancient religion to which he has become a proselyte; or until some persons from your side of the water, to please your new Hebrew brethren, shall ransom him. He may then be enabled to purchase, with the old boards of the synagogue, and a very small poundage, on the long compound interest of the thirty pieces of silver (Dr. Price has shewn us what miracles compound interest will perform in 1790 years) the lands which are lately discovered to have been usurped by the Gallican church. Send us your popish archbishop of Paris, and we will send you our protestant Rabbin. We shall treat the person you send us in exchange like a gentleman and an honest man, as he is; but pray let him bring with him the fund of his hospitality, bounty, and charity; and, depend upon it, we shall never confiscate a shilling of that honourable and pious fund, nor think of enriching the treasury with the spoils of the poor-box.

To tell you the truth, my dear Sir, I think the honour of our nation to be somewhat concerned in the disclaimer of the proceedings of this society of the old Jewry and the London Tavern. I have no man's proxy. I speak only for myself; when I disclaim, as I do with all possible earnestness, all communion with the actors in that triumph, or with the admirers of it. When I assert any thing else, as concerning the people of England, I speak

from observation, not from authority; but I speak from the experience I have had in a pretty extensive and mixed communication with the inhabitants of this kingdom, of all descriptions and ranks, and after a course of attentive observation, begun in early life, and continued for near forty years. I have often been astonished, considering that we are divided from you but by a slender dyke of about twenty-four miles, and that the mutual intercourse between the two countries has lately been very great, to find how little you seem to know of us. I suspect that this is owing to your forming a judgment of this nation from certain publications, which do, very erroneously, if they do at all, represent the opinions and dispositions generally prevalent in England. The vanity, restlessness, petulance, and spirit of intrigue of several petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of consequence in bustle and noise, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a general mark of acquiescence in their opinions. No such thing, I assure you. Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that of course, they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour.

I almost venture to affirm, that not one in a hundred among us participates in the "triumph" of the revolution society. If the king and queen of France, and their children, were to fall into our hands by the chance of war, in the most acrimonious of all hostilities (I deprecate such an event, I deprecate such hostility) they would be treated with another sort of triumphal entry into London. We formerly have had a king of France in that situation; you have read how he was treated by the victor in the field; and in what manner he was afterwards received in England. Four hundred years have gone over us; but I believe we are not materially changed since that period. Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our forefathers. We have not (as I conceive) lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we subtilized ourselves into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau; we are not the disciples of Voltaire; Helvetius has made no progress among us. Atheists are not our preachers; madmen are not our lawgivers. We know that *we* have made no discoveries; and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality; nor many in the great principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty, which were understood long before we were born, altogether as well as they will be after the grave has heaped its mould upon our presumption, and the silent tomb shall have imposed its law on our pert loquacity. In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; we still feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals. We have not been drawn and trussed, in order that we may be filled, like stuffed birds in a museum, with chaff and rags and paltry blurred shreds of paper about the rights of man. We preserve the whole of our feelings, still native and entire, unsophisticated by pedantry and infidelity. We have real hearts of flesh and blood beating in our bosoms. We fear God; we look up with awe to kings; with affection to parliaments; with duty to magistrates; with reverence to priests; and with respect to nobility.* Why? because when such ideas are brought before our minds, it is *natural* to be so affected; because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty; and by teaching us a servile, licentious, and abandoned insolence, to be our low sport for a few holidays, to make us perfectly fit for, and justly deserving of slavery, through the whole course of our lives.

You see, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confess, that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to

* The English are, I conceive, misrepresented in a letter published in one of the papers by a gentleman thought to be a dissenting minister.—When writing to Dr. Price of the spirit which prevails at Paris, he says, "The spirit of the people in this place has abolished all the proud *distinctions* which the *king* and *nobles* had usurped in their minds; whether they talk of *the king, the noble, or the priest*, their whole language is that of the most *enlightened and liberal among the English*." If this gentleman means to confine the terms *enlightened and liberal* to one set of men in England, it may be true. It is not generally so.

take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that the stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages. Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.

Your literary men, and your politicians, and so do the whole clan of the enlightened among us, essentially differ in these points. They have no respect for the wisdom of others; but they pay it off by a very full measure of confidence in their own. With them it is a sufficient motive to destroy an old scheme of things, because it is an old one. As to the new, they are in no sort of fear with regard to the duration of a building run up in haste; because duration is no object to those who think little or nothing has been done before their time, and who place all their hopes in discovery. They conceive, very systematically, that all things which give perpetuity are mischievous, and therefore they are at inexpiable war with all establishments. They think that government may vary like modes of dress, and with as little ill-effect: that there needs no principle of attachment, except a sense of present conveniency, to any constitution of the state. They always speak as if they were of opinion that there is a singular species of compact between them and their magistrates, which binds the magistrate, but which has nothing reciprocal in it, but that the majesty of the people has a right to dissolve it without any reason, but its will. Their attachment to their country itself is only so far as it agrees with some of their fleeting projects; it begins and ends with that scheme of polity which falls in with their momentary opinion.

These doctrines, or rather sentiments, are prevalent with your new statesmen. But they are wholly different from those on which we have always acted in this country.

I hear it is sometimes given out in France, that what is doing among you is after the example of England. I beg leave to affirm, that scarcely any thing done with you has originated from the practice or the prevalent opinions of this people, either in the act or in the spirit of the proceeding. Let me add, that we are as unwilling to learn these lessons from France, as we are sure that we never taught them to that nation. The cabals here who take a sort of share in your transactions, as yet consist of but a handful of people. If unfortunately by their intrigues, their sermons, their publications, and by a confidence derived from an expected union with the counsels and force of the French nation, they should draw considerable numbers into their faction, and in consequence should seriously attempt any thing here in imitation of what has been done with you, the event, I dare venture to prophesy, will be, that, with some trouble to their country, they will soon accomplish their own destruction. This people refused to change their law in remote ages, from respect to the infallibility of popes; and they will not now alter it from a pious implicit faith in the dogmatism of philosophers; though the former was armed with the anathema and crusade, and though the latter should act with the libel and the lamp iron.

Formerly your affairs were your own concern only. We felt for them as men; but we kept aloof from them, because we were not citizens of France. But when we see the model held up to ourselves, we must feel as Englishmen, and feeling, we must provide as Englishmen. Your affairs, in spite of us, are made a part of our interest; so far at least as to keep at a distance your panacea, or your plague. If it be a panacea, we do not want it. We know the consequences of unnecessary physic. If it be a plague; it is such a plague, that the precautions, of the most severe quarantine ought to be established against it.

I hear on all hands that a cabal, calling itself philosophic, receives the glory of many of the late proceedings; and that their opinions and systems are the true actuating spirit of the whole of them. I have heard of no party in England, literary or political, at any time, known by such a description. It is not with

you composed of those men, is it? whom the vulgar, in their blunt homely style, commonly call Atheists and Infidels? If it be, I admit that we too have had writers of that description, who made some noise in their day. At present they repose in lasting oblivion. Who, born within the last forty years, has read one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who called themselves Freethinkers? Who now reads Bolingbroke? Who ever read him through? Ask the booksellers of London what is become of all these lights of the world. In as few years their few successors will go to the family vault of "all the Capulets." But whatever they were, or are, with us, they were and are wholly unconnected individuals. With us they kept the common nature of their kind, and were not gregarious. They never acted in corps, or were known as a faction in the state, nor presumed to influence in that name or character, or for the purposes of such a faction, on any of our public concerns. Whether they ought so to exist, and so be permitted to act, is another question. As such cabals have not existed in England, so neither has the spirit of them had any influence in establishing the original frame of our constitution, or in any one of the several reparations and improvements it has undergone. The whole has been done under the auspices, and is confirmed by the sanctions of religion and piety. The whole has emanated from the simplicity of our national character, and from a sort of native plainness and directness of understanding which for a long time characterized those men who have successively obtained authority among us. This disposition still remains, at least in the great body of the people.

We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort.* In England we are so convinced of this, that there is no rust of superstition, with which the accumulated absurdity of the human mind might have crusted it over in the course of ages, that ninty-nine in a hundred of the people of England would not prefer to impiety. We shall never be such fools as to call in an enemy to the substance of any system to remove its corruptions, to supply its defects, or to perfect its construction. If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on atheism to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incense, than the infectious stuff which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics. If our ecclesiatical establishment should want a revision, it is not avarice or rapacity, public or private, that we shall employ for the audit, or receipt, or application of its consecrated revenue. Violently condemning neither the Greek nor the Armenian, nor, since heats are subsided, the Roman system of religion, we prefer the Protestant; not because we think it has less of the Christian religion in it, but because, in our judgment, it has more. We are Protestants, not from indifference but from zeal.

We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against, not only our reason but our instincts; and that it cannot prevail long. But if, in the moment of riot, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, which in France is now so furiously boiling, we should uncover our nakedness by throwing off that Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilization among us, and among many other nations, we are apprehensive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a void) that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition, might take place of it.

For that reason, before we take from our establishment the natural human means of estimation, and give it up to contempt, as you have done, and in doing it have incurred the penalties you well deserve to suffer, we desire that some other may be presented to us in the place of it. We shall then form our judgment.

On these ideas, instead of quarrelling with establishments, as some do, who have made a philosophy and a religion of their hostility to such institutions, we cleave closely to them. We are resolved to keep an established church, an established monarchy, an established aristocracy, and an established democracy, each in the degree it exists, and in no greater. I shall shew you presently how much of each of these we possess.

It has been the misfortune (not as these gentlemen think it, the glory) of this age, that

* Sit igitur hoc ab initio persuasum civibus, dominos esse omnium rerum ac moderatores, deos; eaque, quæ gerantur, eorum geri vi ditione, ac numine; eosdemque optime de genere hominum mereri; et qualis quisque sit, quid agat, quid in se admittat, qua mente qua pietate colat religiones intueri: piorum et impiorum habere rationem. His enim rebus imbutæ mentes haud sane abhorrebunt ab utili et a vera sententia, Cic. de Legibus, l. 2.

every thing is to be discussed, as if the constitution of our country were to be always a subject rather of altercation than enjoyment. For this reason, as well as for the satisfaction of those among you (if any such you have among you) who may wish to profit of examples, I venture to trouble you with a few thoughts upon each of these establishments. I do not think they were unwise in ancient Rome, who, when they wished to new-model their laws, sent commissioners to examine the best constituted republics within their reach.

First, I beg leave to speak of our church establishment, which is the first of our prejudices, not a prejudice destitute of reason, but involving in it profound and extensive wisdom. I speak of it first. It is first, and last, and midst in our minds. For, taking ground on that religious system, of which we are now in possession, we continue to act on the early received, and uniformly continued sense of mankind. That sense not only, like a wise architect, hath built up the august fabric of states, but like a provident proprietor, to preserve the structure from prophanation and ruin, as a sacred temple, purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injustice, and tyranny, hath solemnly and for ever consecrated the commonwealth, and all that officiate in it. This consecration is made, that all who administer in the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and destination; that their hope should be full of immortality; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid permanent existence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

Such sublime principles ought to be infused into persons of exalted situations; and religious establishments provided, that may continually revive and enforce them. Every sort of moral, every sort of civil, every sort of politic institution, aiding the rational and natural ties that connect the human understanding and affections to the divine, are not more than necessary, in order to build up that wonderful structure, Man; whose prerogative it is, to be in a great degree a creature of his own making; and who when made as he ought to be made, is destined to hold no trivial place int he creation. But whenever man is put over men, as the better nature ought ever to preside, in that case more particularly, he should as nearly as possible be approximated to his perfection.

The consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment, is necessary also to operate with a wholesome awe upon free citizens; because, in order to secure their freedom, they must enjoy some determinate portion of power. To them therefore a religion connected with the state, and with their duty towards it, becomes even more necessary than in such societies, where the people by the terms of their subjection are confined to private sentiments, and the management of their own family concerns. All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author and founder of society.

This principle ought even to be more strongly impressed upon the minds of those who compose the collective sovereignty than upon those of single princes. Without instruments, these princes can do nothing. Whoever uses instruments, in finding helps, finds also impediments. Their power is therefore by no means complete; nor are they safe in extreme abuse. Such persons, however elevated by flattery, arrogance, and self-opinion, must be sensible that, whether covered or not by positive law, in some way or other they are accountable even here for the abuse of their trust. If they are not cut off by a rebellion of their people, they may be strangled by the very janissaries kept for their security against all other rebellion. Thus we have seen the king of France sold by his soldiers for an increase of pay. But where popular authority is absolute and unrestrained, the people have an infinitely greater, because a far better founded confidence in their own power. They are themselves in a great measure, their own instruments. They are nearer to their objects. Besides, they are less under responsibility to one of the greatest controuling powers on earth, the sense of fame and estimation. The share of infamy that is likely to fall to the lot of each individual in public acts, is small indeed; the operation of opinion being in the inverse ratio to the number of those who abuse power. Their own approbation of their own acts has to them the appearance of a public judgment in their favour. A perfect democracy is therefore the most shameless thing in the world. As it is the most shameless, it is also the most fearless. No man apprehends in his person he can be made subject to punishment. Certainly the people at large never ought: for as all punishments are for example towards the

conservation of the people at large, the people at large can never become the subject of punishment by any human hand.* It is therefore of infinite importance that they should not be suffered to imagine that their will, any more than that of kings, is the standard of right and wrong. They ought to be persuaded that they are full as little entitled, and far less qualified, with safety to themselves, to use any arbitrary power whatsoever; that therefore they are not, under a false shew of liberty, but, in truth, to exercise an unnatural inverted domination, tyrannically to exact, from those who officiate in the state, not an entire devotion to their interest, which is their right, but an abject submission to their occasional will; extinguishing thereby, in all those who serve them, all moral principle, all sense of dignity, all use of judgment, and all consistency of character, whilst by the very same process they give themselves up a proper, a suitable, but a most contemptible prey to the servile ambition of popular sycophants or courtly flatterers.

When the people have emptied themselves of all the lust of selfish will, which without religion it is utterly impossible they ever should, when they are conscious that they exercise, and exercise perhaps in a higher link of the order of delegation, the power, which to be legitimate must be according to that eternal immutable law, in which will and reason are the same, they will be more careful how they place power in base and incapable hands. In their nomination to office, they will not appoint to the exercise of authority, as to a pitiful job, but as to a holy function; not according to their sordid selfish interest, nor to their wanton caprice, nor to their arbitrary will; but they will confer that power (which any man may well tremble to give or to receive) on those only, in whom they may discern that predominant proportion of active virtue and wisdom, taken together and fitted to the charge, such, as in the great and inevitable mixed mass of human imperfections and infirmities, is to be found.

When they are habitually convinced that no evil can be acceptable, either in the act or the permission, to him whose essence is good, they will be better able to extirpate out of the minds of all magistrates, civil, ecclesiastical, or military, any thing that bears the least resemblance to a proud and lawless domination.

But one of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated, is lest the temporary possessors and life-renters in it, unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors, or of what is due to their posterity, should act as if they were the entire masters; that they should not think it among their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste on the inheritance, by destroying at their pleasure the whole original fabric of their society; hazarding to leave to those who come after them, a ruin instead of an habitation—and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances, as they had themselves respected the institutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer.

And first of all, the science of jurisprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errours, is the collected reason of ages, combining the principles of original justice with the infinite variety of human concerns, as a heap of old exploded errours, would be no longer studied. Personal self-sufficiency and arrogance (the certain attendants upon all those who have never experienced a wisdom greater than their own) would usurp the tribunal. Of course, no certain laws, establishing invariable grounds of hope and fear, would keep the actions of men in a certain course, or direct them to a certain end. Nothing stable in the modes of holding property, or exercising function, could form a solid ground on which any parent could speculate in the education of his offspring, or in a choice for their future establishment in the world. No principles would be early worked into the habits. As soon as the most able instructor had completed his laborious course of institution, instead of sending forth his pupil, accomplished in a virtuous discipline, fitted to procure him attention and respect, in his place in society, he would find every thing altered; and that he had turned out a poor creature to the contempt and derision of the world, ignorant of the true grounds of estimation. Who would insure a tender and delicate sense of honour to beat almost with the first pulses of the heart, when no man could know what would be the test of honour in a nation, continually varying the standard of its coin? No part of life would retain its acquisitions. Barbarism with regard to science and literature, unskilfulness with regard to arts and manufactures, would infalli-

* Quicquid multis peccatur inultum.

bly succeed to the want of a steady education and settled principle; and thus the commonwealth itself would, in a few generations, crumble away, be disconnected into the dust and powder of individuality, and at length dispersed to all the winds of heaven.

To avoid therefore the evils of inconstancy and versatility, ten thousand times worse than those of obstinacy and the blindest prejudice, we have consecrated the state, that no man should approach to look into its defects or corruptions but with due caution; that he should never dream of beginning its reformation by its subversion; that he should approach to the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude. By this wise prejudice we are taught to look with horrour on those children of their country who are prompt rashly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him into the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poisonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may regenerate the paternal constitution, and renovate their father's life.

Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure—but the state ought not to be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primæval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place. This law is not subject to the will of those, who by an obligation above them, and infinitely superiour, are bound to submit their will to that law. The municipal corporations of that universal kingdom are not morally at liberty at their pleasure, and on their speculations of a contingent improvement, wholly to separate and tear asunder the bands of their subordinate community, and to dissolve it into an unsocial, uncivil, unconnected chaos of elementary principles. It is the first and supreme necessity only, a necessity that is not chosen, but chooses, a necessity paramount to deliberation, that admits no discussion, and demands no evidence, which alone can justify a resort to anarchy. This necessity is no exception to the rule; because this necessity itself is a part too of that moral and physical disposition of things to which man must be obedient by consent of force; but if that which is only submission to necessity should be made the object of choice, the law is broken, nature is disobeyed, and the rebellious are outlawed, cast forth, and exiled, from this world of reason, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagonist world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and unavailing sorrow.

These, my dear Sir, are, were, and I think long will be, the sentiments of not the least learned and reflecting part of this kingdom. They who are included in this description, form their opinions on such grounds as such persons ought to form them. The less inquiring receive them from an authority, which those whom Providence dooms to live on trust need not be ashamed to rely on. These two sorts of men move in the same direction, though in a different place. They both move with the order of the universe. They all know or feel this great ancient truth: "Quod illi principi et præpotenti Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit, nihil eorum quæ quidem fiunt in terris acceptius quam concilia et cœtus hominum jure sociati quæ civitates appellantur." They take this tenet of the head and heart, not from the great name which it immediately bears, nor from the greater from whence it is derived; but from that which alone can give true weight and sanction to any learned opinion, the common nature and common relation of men. Persuaded that all things ought to be done with reference, and referring all to the point of reference to which all should be directed, they think themselves bound, not only as individuals in the sanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that personal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and cast; but also in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the institutor, and author and protector of civil society; without which civil society man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it.

They conceive that He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection.—He willed therefore the state—He willed its connection with the source and original archetype of all perfection. They who are convinced of this his will, which is the law of laws, and the sovereign of sovereigns, cannot think it reprehensible that this our corporate fealty and homage, that this our recognition of a signiory paramount, I had almost said this oblation of the state itself, as a worthy offering on the high altar of universal praise, should be performed as all public solemn acts are performed, in buildings, in music, in decorations, in speech, in the dignity of persons, according to the customs of mankind, taught by their nature! that is, with modest splendour, with unassuming state, with mild majesty and sober pomp. For those purposes they think some part of the wealth of the country is as usefully employed as it can be, in fomenting the luxury of individuals. It is the public ornament. It is the public consolation. It nourishes the public hope. The poorest man finds his own importance and dignity in it, whilst the wealth and pride of individuals at every moment makes the man of humble rank and fortune sensible of his inferiority, and degrades and vilifies his condition. It is for the man in humble life, and to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue, that this portion of the general wealth of his country is employed and sanctified.

I assure you I do not aim at singularity. I give you opinions which have been accepted among us, from very early times to this moment, with a continued and general approbation, and which indeed are so worked into my mind, that I am unable to distinguish what I have learned from others from the results of my own meditation.

It is on some such principles that the majority of the people of England, far from thinking a religious national establishment unlawful, hardly think it lawful to be without one. In France you are wholly mistaken if you do not believe us above all other things attached to it, and beyond all other nations; and when this people has acted unwisely and unjustifiably in its favour (as in some instances they have done most certainly) in their very errours you will at least discover their zeal.

This principle runs through the whole system of their polity. They do not consider their church establishment as convenient, but as essential to their state; not as a thing heterogeneous and separable; something added for accommodation; what they may either keep or lay aside, according to their temporary ideas of convenience. They consider it as the foundation of their whole constitution, with which, and with every part of which, it holds an indissoluble union. Church and state are ideas inseparable in their minds, and scarcely is the one ever mentioned without mentioning the other.

Our education is so formed as to confirm and fix this impression. Our education is in a manner wholly in the hands of ecclesiastics, and in all stages from infancy to manhood. Even when our youth, leaving schools and universities, enter that most important period of life which begins to link experience and study together, and when with that view they visit other countries, instead of old domestics whom we have seen as governours to principal men from other parts, three-fourths of those who go abroad with our young nobility and gentlemen are ecclesiastics; not as austere masters, nor as mere followers; but as friends and companions of a graver character, and not seldom persons as well born as themselves. With them, as relations, they most commonly keep up a close connection through life. By this connection we conceive that we attach our gentlemen to the church; and we liberalize the church by an intercourse with the leading characters of the country.

So tenacious are we of the old ecclesiastical modes and fashions of institution, that very little alteration has been made in them since the fourteenth or fifteenth century; adhering in this particular, as in all things else, to our old settled maxim, never entirely nor at once to depart from antiquity. We found these old institutions, on the whole, favourable to morality and discipline; and we thought they were susceptible of amendment, without altering the ground. We thought that they were capable of receiving and meliorating, and above all of preserving, the accessions of science and literature, as the order of Providence should successively produce them. And after all, with this gothic and monkish education (for such it is in the ground-work) we may put in our claim to as ample and as early a share in all the improvements in science, in arts, and in literature, which have illuminated and adorned the modern world, as any other nation in Europe; we think one main cause of this improvement was our not despising the patrimony of knowledge which was left us by our forefathers.

It is from our attachment to a church establishment that the English nation did not think it wise to entrust that great fundamental interest of the whole to what they trust no part of their civil or military public service, that is, to the unsteady and precarious contribution of individuals. They go further. They certainly never have suffered and never will suffer the fixed estate of the church to be converted into a pension, to depend on the treasury, and to be delayed, withheld, or perhaps to be extinguished by fiscal difficulties; which difficulties may sometimes be pretended for political purposes, and are in fact often brought on by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. The people of England think that they have constitutional motives, as well as religious, against any project of turning their independent clergy into ecclesiastical pensioners of state. They tremble for their liberty, from the influence of a clergy dependent on the crown; they tremble for the public tranquillity from the disorders of a factious clergy, if it were made to depend upon any other than the crown. They therefore made their church, like their king and their nobility, independent.

From the united considerations of religion and constitutional policy, from their opinion of a duty to make a sure provision for the consolation of the feeble, and the instruction of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the estate of the church with the mass of *private property*, of which the state is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator. They have ordained that the provision of this establishment might be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions.

The men of England, the men, I mean, of light and leading in England, whose wisdom (if they have any) is open and direct, would be ashamed, as of a silly deceitful trick, to profess any religion in name, which by their proceedings they appear to contemn. If by their conduct (the only language that rarely lies) they seemed to regard the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world, as a mere invention to keep the vulgar in obedience, they apprehend that by such a conduct they would defeat the politic purpose they have in view. They would find it difficult to make others believe in a system to which they manifestly gave no credit themselves. The Christian statesmen of this land would indeed first provide for the *multitude;* because it is the *multitude;* and is therefore, as such, the first object in the ecclesiastical institution, and in all institutions. They have been taught, that the circumstance of the gospel's being preached to the poor, was one of the great tests of its true mission. They think, therefore, that those do not believe it, who do not take care it should be preached to the poor. But as they know that charity is not confined to any one description, but ought to apply itself to all men who have wants, they are not deprived of a due and anxious sensation of pity to the distresses of the miserable great. They are not repelled through a fastidious delicacy, at the stench of their arrogance and presumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running sores. They are sensible, that religious instruction is of more consequence to them than to any others; from the greatness of the temptation to which they are exposed; from the important consequences that attend their faults; from the contagion of their ill example; from the necessity of bowing down the stubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of moderation and virtue; from a consideration of the fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports man most to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field.

The English people are satisfied, that to the great the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions. They too are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain and domestic sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to these, our often very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; something to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do; something to excite an appetite to existence in the palled satiety which attends on all pleasures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight; and no interval, no obstacle, is interposed between the wish and the accomplishment.

The people of England know how little influence the teachers of religion are likely to

have with the wealthy and powerful of long standing, and how much less with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way assorted to those with whom they must associate, and over whom they must even exercise, in some cases, something like an authority. What must they think of that body of teachers, if they see it in no part above the establishment of their domestic servants? If the poverty were voluntary, there might be some difference. Strong instances of self-denial operate powerfully on our minds; and a man who has no wants has obtained great freedom and firmness, and even dignity. But as the mass of any description of men are but men, and their poverty cannot be voluntary, that disrespect which attends upon all lay poverty, will not depart from the ecclesiastical. Our provident constitution has therefore taken care that those who are to instruct presumptuous ignorance, those who are to be censors over insolent vice, should neither incur their contempt, nor live upon their alms; nor will it tempt the rich to a neglect of the true medicine of their minds. For these reasons, whilst we provide first for the poor, and with a parental solicitude, we have not relegated religion (like something we were ashamed to shew) to obscure municipalities or rustic villages. No! we will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments. We will have her mixed throughout the whole mass of life, and blended with all the classes of society. The people of England will shew to the haughty potentates of the world, and to their talking sophisters, that a free, a generous, an informed nation, honours the high magistrates of its church; that it will not suffer the insolence of wealth and titles, or any other species of proud pretension, to look down with scorn upon what they look up to with reverence; nor presume to trample on that acquired personal nobility, which they intend always to be, and which often is, the fruit, not the reward, (for what can be the reward?) of learning, piety, and virtue. They can see, without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke. They can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that squire; although it may be true, that so many dogs and horses are not kept by the former, and fed with the victuals which ought to nourish the children of the people. It is true, the whole church revenue is not always employed, and to every shilling, in charity; nor perhaps ought it; but something is generally so employed. It is better to cherish virtue and humanity, by leaving much to free will, even with some loss to the object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and instruments of a political benevolence. The world on the whole will gain by a liberty, without which virtue cannot exist.

When once the commonwealth has established the estates of the church as property, it can, consistently, hear nothing of the more or the less. Too much and too little are treason against property. What evil can arise from the quantity in any hand, whilst the supreme authority has the full, sovereign, superintendence over this, as over any property, to prevent every species of abuse; and, whenever it notably deviates, to give to it a direction agreeable to the purposes of its institution.

In England most of us conceive that it is envy and malignity towards those who are often the beginners of their own fortune, and not a love of the self-denial and mortification of the ancient church, that makes some look askance at the distinctions, and honours, and revenues, which, taken from no person, are set apart for virtue. The ears of the people of England are distinguishing. They hear these men speak broad. Their tongue betrays them. Their language is in the *patois* of fraud; in the cant and gibberish of hypocrisy. The people of England must think so, when these praters affect to carry back the clergy to that primitive evangelic poverty, which, in the spirit, ought always to exist in them, (and in us too, however we may like it,) but in the thing must be varied, when the relation of that body to the state is altered; when manners, when modes of life, when indeed the whole order of human affairs has undergone a total revolution. We shall believe those reformers then to be honest enthusiasts, not as now we think them, cheats and deceivers, when we see them throwing their own goods into common, and submitting their own persons to the austere discipline of the early church.

With these ideas rooted in their minds, the commons of Great Britain, in the national emergencies, will never seek their resource from the confiscation of the estates of the church and poor. Sacrilege and proscription are not among the ways and means of our committee of supply. The Jews in Change Alley have not yet dared to hint their hopes of a mortgage on the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury. I am not afraid that I shall be disavowed, when I assure you, that there is not *one* public man in this kingdom, whom you would wish to quote; no not one of

any party or description, who does not reprobate the dishonest, perfidious, and cruel confiscation which the national assembly has been compelled to make, of that property which it was their first duty to protect.

It is with the exultation of a little national pride I tell you, that those among us who have wished to pledge the societies of Paris in the cup of their abominations, have been disappointed. The robbery of your church has proved a security to the possessions of ours. It has roused the people. They see with horrour and alarm that enormous and shameless act of proscription. It has opened, and will more and more open, their eyes upon the selfish enlargement of mind, and the narrow liberality of sentiment of insidious men, which, commencing in close hypocrisy and fraud, have ended in open violence and rapine. At home we behold similar beginnings. We are on our guard against similar conclusions.

I hope we shall never be so totally lost to all sense of the duties imposed upon us by the law of social union, as, upon any pretext of public service, to confiscate the goods of a single unoffending citizen. Who but a tyrant (a name expressive of every thing which can vitiate and degrade human nature) could think of seizing on the property of men, unaccused, unheard, untried, by whole descriptions, by hundreds and thousands together? Who that had not lost every trace of humanity, could think of casting down men of exalted rank and sacred function, some of them of an age to call at once for reverence and compassion, of casting them down from the highest situation in the commonwealth, wherein they were maintained by their own landed property, to a state of indigence, depression, and contempt?

The confiscators truly have made some allowance to their victims from the scraps and fragments of their own tables, from which they have been so harshly driven, and which have been so bountifully spread for a feast to the harpies of usury. But to drive men from independence to live on alms, is itself great cruelty. That which might be a tolerable condition to men in one state of life, and not habituated to other things, may, when all these circumstances are altered, be a dreadful revolution; and one to which a virtuous mind would feel pain in condemning any guilt, except that which would demand the life of the offender. But to many minds this punishment of *degradation* and *infamy* is worse than death. Undoubtedly it is an infinite aggravation of this cruel suffering, that the persons who were taught a double prejudice in favour of religion, by education, and by the place they held in the administration of its functions, are to receive the remnants of the property as alms from the profane and impious hands of those who had plundered them of all the rest; to receive (if they are at all to receive) not from the charitable contributions of the faithful, but from the insolent tenderness of known and avowed atheism, the maintenance of religion, measured out to them on the standard of the contempt in which it is held; and for the purpose of rendering those who receive the allowance vile, and of no estimation in the eyes of mankind.

But this act of seizure of property, it seems, is a judgment in law, and not a confiscation. They have, it seems, found out in the academies of the *Palais Royal*, and the *Jacobins*, that certain men had no right to the possessions which they held under law, usage, the decisions of courts, and the accumulated prescription of a thousand years. They say that ecclesiastics are fictitious persons, creatures of the state, whom at pleasure they may destroy, and of course limit and modify in every particular; that the goods they possess are not properly theirs, but belong to the state which created the fiction; and we are therefore not to trouble ourselves with what they may suffer in their natural feelings and natural persons, on account of what is done towards them in this their constructive character. Of what import is it, under what names you injure men, and deprive them of the just emoluments of a profession, in which they were not only permitted but encouraged by the state to engage; and upon the supposed certainty of which emoluments they had formed the plan of their lives, contracted debts, and led multitudes to an entire dependence upon them?

You do not imagine, Sir, that I am going to compliment the miserable distinction of persons with any long discussion. The arguments of tyranny are as contemptible as its force is dreadful. Had not your confiscators, by their early crimes, obtained a power which secures indemnity to all the crimes of which they have since been guilty, or that they can commit, it is not the syllogism of the logician, but the lash of the executioner that would have refuted a sophistry which becomes an accomplice of theft and murder. The sophistic tyrants of Paris are loud in their declamations against the departed regal tyrants, who in former ages have vexed the world. They are thus bold, because they are safe from the dungeons and iron cages of their old masters. Shall we be more tender of the tyrants of our own time,

when we see them acting worse tragedies under our eyes? shall we not use the same liberty that they do, when we can use it with the same safety? when to speak honest truth only requires a contempt of the opinion of those whose actions we abhor?

This outrage on all the rights of property was at first covered with what, on the system of their conduct, was the most astonishing of all pretexts—a regard to national faith. The enemies to property at first pretended a most tender, delicate, and scrupulous anxiety for keeping the king's engagements with the public creditor. These professors of the rights of men are so busy in teaching others, that they have not leisure to learn any thing themselves: otherwise they would have known, that it is to the property of the citizen, and not to the demands of the creditor of the state, that the first and original faith of civil society is pledged. The claim of the citizen is prior in time, paramount in title, superiour in equity. The fortunes of individuals, whether possessed by acquisition, or by descent, or in virtue of a participation in the goods of some community, were no part of the creditor's security, expressed or implied. They never so much as entered into his head when he made his bargain. He well knew that the public, whether represented by a monarch or by a senate, can pledge nothing but the public estate; and it can have no public estate, except in what it derives from a just and proportioned imposition upon the citizens at large. This was engaged, and nothing else could be engaged to the public creditor. No man can mortgage his injustice as a pawn for his fidelity.

It is impossible to avoid some observation on the contradictions caused by the extreme rigour and the extreme laxity of this new public faith, which influenced in this transaction, and which influenced not according to the nature of the obligation, but to the description of the persons to whom it was engaged. No acts of the old government of the kings of France are held valid in the national assembly, except its pecuniary engagements; acts of all others of the most ambiguous legality. The rest of the acts of that royal government are considered in so odious a light, that to have a claim under its authority is looked on as a sort of crime. A pension, given as a reward for service to the state, is surely as good a ground of property as any security for money advanced to the state. It is a better; for money is paid, and well paid, to obtain that service. We have however seen multitudes of people under this description in France, who never had been deprived of their allowances by the most arbitrary ministers, in the most arbitrary times, by this assembly of the rights of men, robbed without mercy. They were told, in answer to their claim to the bread earned with their blood, that their services had not been rendered to the country that now exists.

This laxity of public faith is not confined to those unfortunate persons. The assembly, with perfect consistency it must be owned, is engaged in a respectable deliberation how far it is bound by the treaties made with other nations under the former government, and their committee is to report which of them they ought to ratify, and which not. By this means they have put the external fidelity of this virgin state on a par with its internal.

It is not easy to conceive upon what rational principle the royal government should not, of the two, rather have possessed the power of rewarding service, and making treaties, in virtue of its prerogative, than that of pledging to creditors the revenue of the state, actual and possible. The treasure of the nation, of all things, has been the least allowed to the prerogative of the king of France, or to the prerogative of any king in Europe. To mortgage the public revenue implies the sovereign dominion, in the fullest sense, over the public purse. It goes far beyond the trust even of a temporary and occasional taxation. The acts however of that dangerous power (the distinctive mark of a boundless despotism) have been alone held sacred. Whence arose this preference given by a democratic assembly to a body of property deriving its title from the most critical and obnoxious of all the exertions of monarchical authority? Reason can furnish nothing to reconcile inconsistency; nor can partial favour be accounted for upon equitable principles. But the contradiction and partiality which admit no justification, are not the less without an adequate cause; and that cause I do not think it difficult to discover.

By the vast debt of France a great monied interest has insensibly grown up, and with it a great power. By the ancient usages which prevailed in that kingdom, the general circulation of property, and in particular the mutual convertibility of land into money, and of money into land, had always been a matter of difficulty. Family settlements, rather more general and more strict than they are in England, the *jus retractus*, the great mass of landed property held by the crown, and by a maxim of the French law held unalienably, the vast estates of the ecclesiastic corporations,—all these had kept the landed and monied interests

more separated in France, less miscible, and the owners of the two distinct species of property not so well disposed to each other as they are in this country.

The monied property was long looked on with rather an evil eye by the people. They saw it connected with their distresses, and aggravating them. It was no less envied by the old landed interests, partly for the same reasons that rendered it obnoxious to the people, but much more so as it eclipsed, by the splendour of an ostentatious luxury, the unendowed pedigrees and naked titles of several among the nobility. Even when the nobility, which represented the more permanent landed interest, united themselves by marriage (which sometimes was the case) with the other description, the wealth which saved the family from ruin, was supposed to contaminate and degrade it. Thus the enmities and heartburnings of these parties were increased even by the usual means by which discord is made to cease, and quarrels are turned into friendship. In the mean time, the pride of the wealthy men, not noble or newly noble, increased with its cause. They felt with resentment an inferiority, the grounds of which they did not acknowledge. There was no measure to which they were not willing to lend themselves, in order to be revenged of the outrages of this rival pride, and to exalt their wealth to what they considered as its natural rank and estimation. They struck at the nobility through the crown and the church. They attacked them particularly on the side on which they thought them the most vulnerable, that is, the possessions of the church, which, through the patronage of the crown, generally devolved upon the nobility. The bishoprics, and the great commendatory abbies, were, with few exceptions, held by that order.

In this state of real, though not always perceived warfare between the noble ancient landed interest, and the new monied interest, the greatest because the most applicable strength was in the hands of the latter. The monied interest is in its nature more ready for any adventure; and its possessors more disposed to new enterprises of any kind. Being of a recent acquisition, it falls in more naturally with any novelties. It is therefore the kind of wealth which will be resorted to by all who wish for change.

Along with the monied interest, a new description of men had grown up, with whom that interest soon formed a close and marked union; I mean the political men of letters. Men of letters, fond of distinguishing themselves, are rarely averse to innovation. Since the decline of the life and greatness of Louis the Fourteenth, they were not so much cultivated either by him, or by the regent, or the successors to the crown; nor were they engaged to the courts by favours and emoluments so systematically as during the splendid period of the ostentatious and not impolitic reign. What they lost in the old court protection, they endeavoured to make up by joining in a sort of incorporation of their own; to which the two academies of France, and afterwards the vast undertaking of the Encyclopædia, carried on by a society of these gentlemen, did not a little contribute.

The literary cabal had some years ago formed something like a regular plan for the destruction of the Christian religion. This object they pursued with a degree of zeal which hitherto had been discovered only in the propagators of some system of piety. They were possessed with a spirit of proselytism in the most fanatical degree; and from thence, by an easy progress, with the spirit of persecution according to their means.* What was not to be done towards their great end by any direct or immediate act, might be wrought by a longer process through the medium of opinion. To command that opinion, the first step is to establish a dominion over those who direct it. They contrived to possess themselves, with great method and perseverance, of all the avenues to literary fame. Many of them indeed stood high in the ranks of literature and science. The world had done them justice; and in favour of general talents forgave the evil tendency of their peculiar principles. This was true liberality; which they returned in endeavouring to confine the reputation of sense, learning, and taste to themselves or their followers. I will venture to say that this narrow, exclusive spirit has not been less prejudicial to literature and to taste, than to morals and true philosophy. These atheistical fathers have a bigotry of their own; and they have learnt to talk against monks with the spirit of a monk. But in some things they are men of the world. The resources of intrigue are called in to supply the defects of argument and wit. To this system of literary monopoly was joined an unremitting industry to blacken and discredit in every way, and by every means, all those who did not hold to their

* This (down to the end of the first sentence in the next paragraph) and some other parts here and there, were inserted, on his reading the manuscript, by my lost son.

faction. To those who have observed the spirit of their conduct, it has long been clear that nothing was wanted but the power of carrying the intolerance of the tongue and of the pen into a persecution which would strike at property, liberty, and life.

The desultory and faint persecution carried on against them, more from compliance with form and decency than with serious resentment, neither weakened their strength, nor relaxed their efforts. The issue of the whole was, that what with opposition, and what with success, a violent and malignant zeal, of a kind hitherto unknown in the world, had taken an entire possession of their minds, and rendered their whole conversation, which otherwise would have been pleasing and instructive, perfectly disgusting. A spirit of cabal, intrigue, and proselytism, pervaded all their thoughts, words, and actions. And, as controversial zeal soon turns its thoughts on force, they began to insinuate themselves into a correspondence with foreign princes; in hopes, through their authority, which at first they flattered, they might bring about the changes they had in view. To them it was indifferent whether these changes were to be accomplished by the thunderbolt of despotism, or by the earthquake of popular commotion. The correspondence between this cabal and the late king of Prussia, will throw no small light upon the spirit of all their proceedings.* For the same purpose for which they intrigued with princes, they cultivated, in a distinguished manner, the monied interest of France; and partly through the means furnished by those whose peculiar offices gave them the most extensive and certain means of communication, they carefully occupied all the avenues to opinion.

Writers, especially when they act in a body, and with one direction, have great influence on the public mind; the alliance therefore of these writers with the monied interest,† had no small effect in removing the popular odium and envy which attended that species of wealth. These writers, like the propagators of all novelties, pretended to a great zeal for the poor, and the lower orders, whilst in their satires they rendered hateful, by every exaggeration, the faults of courts, of nobility, and of priesthood. They became a sort of demagogues. They served as a link to unite, in favour of one object, obnoxious wealth to restless and desperate poverty.

* I do not choose to shock the feeling of the moral reader with any quotation of their vulgar, base, and profane language.

† Their connection with Turgot and almost all the people of the finance.

As these two kinds of men appear principal leaders in all the late transactions, their junction and politics will serve to account, not upon any principles of law or policy, but as a *cause* for the general fury with which all the landed property of ecclesiastical corporations has been attacked; and the great care which, contrary to their pretended principles, has been taken, of a monied interest originating from the authority of the crown. All the envy against wealth and power, was artificially directed against other descriptions of riches. On what other principle than that which I have stated can we account for an appearance so extraordinary and unnatural as that of the ecclesiastical possessions, which had stood so many successions of ages and shocks of civil violences, and were guarded at once by justice, and by prejudice, being applied to the payment of debts, comparatively recent, invidious, and contracted by a decried and subverted government?

Was the public estate a sufficient stake for the public debts? Assume that it was not, and that a loss *must* be incurred somewhere—When the only estate lawfully possessed, and which the contracting parties had in contemplation at the time in which their bargain was made, happens to fail, who, according to the principles of natural and legal equity, ought to be the sufferer? Certainly it ought to be either the party who trusted, or the party who persuaded him to trust; or both; and not third parties who had no concern with the transaction. Upon any insolvency they ought to suffer who were weak enough to lend upon bad security, or they who fraudulently held out a security that was not valid. Laws are acquainted with no other rules of decision. But by the new institute of the rights of men, the only persons, who in equity ought to suffer, are the only persons who are to be saved harmless: those are to answer the debt who neither were lenders nor borrowers, mortgagers nor mortgagees.

What had the clergy to do with these transactions? What had they to do with any public engagement further than the extent of their own debt? To that, to be sure, their estates were bound to the last acre. Nothing can lead more to the true spirit of the assembly, which sits for public confiscation, with its new equity, and its new morality, than an attention to their proceeding with regard to this debt of the clergy. The body of confiscators, true to that monied interest for which they were false to every other, have found the clergy competent to incur a legal debt. Of course they declared them legally

entitled to the property which their power of incurring the debt and mortgaging the estate implied; recognising the rights of those persecuted citizens, in the very act in which they were thus grossly violated.

If, as I said, any persons are to make good deficiencies to the public creditor, besides the public at large, they must be those who managed the agreement. Why therefore are not the estates of all the comptrollers general confiscated?* Why not those of the long succession of ministers, financiers, and bankers who have been enriched whilst the nation was impoverished by their dealings and their counsels? Why is not the estate of Mr. Laborde declared forfeited rather than of the archbishop of Paris, who has had nothing to do in the creation or in the jobbing of the public funds? Or, if you must confiscate old landed estates in favour of the money-jobbers, why is the penalty confined to one description? I do not know whether the expenses of the duke de Choiseul have left any thing of the infinite sums which he had derived from the bounty of his master, during the transactions of a reign which contributed largely, by every species of prodigality in war and peace, to the present debt of France. If any such remains, why is not this confiscated? I remember to have been in Paris during the time of the old government. I was there just after the duke d'Aiguillon had been snatched (as it was generally thought) from the block by the hand of a protecting despotism. He was a minister, and had some concern in the affairs of that prodigal period. Why do I not see his estate delivered up to the municipalities in which it is situated? The noble family of Noailles have long been servants (meritorious servants I admit) to the crown of France, and have had of course some share in its bounties. Why do I hear nothing of the application of their estates to the public debt? Why is the estate of the duke de Rochefoucault more sacred than that of the cardinal de Rochefoucault? The former is, I doubt not, a worthy person; and (if it were not a sort of profaneness to talk of the use, as affecting the title to property) he makes a good use of his revenues; but it is no disrespect to him to say, what authentic information well warrants me in saying, that the use made of a property equally valid, by his brother † the cardinal archbishop of Rouen, was far more laudable and far more public-spirited. Can one hear of the proscription of such persons, and the confiscation of their effects, without indignation and horrour? He is not a man who does not feel such emotions on such occasions. He does not deserve the name of a free man who will not express them.

Few barbarous conquerours have ever made so terrible a revolution in property. None of the heads of the Roman factions, when they established "*crudelem illam hastam*" in all their auctions of rapine, have ever set up to sale the goods of the conquered citizen to such an enormous amount. It must be allowed in favour of those tyrants of antiquity, that what was done by them could hardly be said to be done in cold blood. Their passions were inflamed, their tempers soured, their understandings confused, with the spirit of revenge, with the innumerable reciprocated and recent inflictions and retaliations of blood and rapine. They were driven beyond all bounds of moderation by the apprehension of the return of power with the return of property, to the families of those they had injured beyond all hope of forgiveness.

These Roman confiscators, who were yet only in the elements of tyranny, and were not instructed in the rights of men to exercise all sorts of cruelties on each other without provocation, thought it necessary to spread a sort of colour over their injustice. They considered the vanquished party as composed of traitors who had borne arms, or otherwise had acted with hostility against the commonwealth. They regarded them as persons who had forfeited their property by their crimes. With you, in your improved state of the human mind, there was no such formality. You seized upon five millions sterling of annual rent, and turned forty or fifty thousand human creatures out of their houses, because "such was your pleasure." The tyrant Harry the eighth of England, as he was not better enlightened than the Roman Marius's and Sylla's, and had not studied in your new schools, did not know what an effectual instrument of despotism was to be found in that grand magazine of offensive weapons, the rights of men. When he resolved to rob the abbies, as the club of Jacobins have robbed all the ecclesiastics, he began by setting on foot a commission to examine into the crimes and abuses which prevailed in those communities. As it might be expected, his commission reported truths, exaggerations, and falsehoods. But truly or falsely it reported abuses and offences. However, as abuses might be corrected, as every crime of persons does not infer a forfeiture with regard to communities, and as property, in that dark age, was not discovered to be a

* All have been confiscated in their turn.

† Not his brother, nor any near relation; but this mistake does not affect the argument.

creature of prejudice, all those abuses (and there were enough of them) were hardly thought sufficient ground for such a confiscation as it was for his purposes to make. He therefore procured the formal surrender of these estates. All these operose proceedings were adopted by one of the most decided tyrants in the rolls of history, as necessary preliminaries, before he could venture, by bribing the members of his two servile houses with a share of the spoil, and holding out to them an eternal immunity from taxation, to demand a confirmation of his iniquitous proceedings by an act of parliament. Had fate reserved him to our times, four technical terms would have done his business, and saved him all this trouble; he needed nothing more than one short form of incantation—"*Philosophy, Light, Liberality, the Rights of Men.*"

I can say nothing in praise of those acts of tyranny, which no voice has hitherto ever commended under any of their false colours; yet in these false colours an homage was paid by despotism to justice. The power which was above all fear and all remorse was not set above all shame. Whilst shame keeps its watch, virtue is not wholly extinguished in the heart; nor will moderation be utterly exiled from the minds of tyrants.

I believe every honest man sympathizes in his reflections with our political poet on that occasion, and will pray to avert the omen whenever these acts of rapacious despotism present themselves to his view or his imagination:

——"May no such storm
Fall on our times, where ruin must reform.
Tell me (my muse) what monstrous, dire offence,
What crimes could any Christian king incense
To such a rage? Was't luxury, or lust?
Was *he* so temperate, so chaste, so just?
Were these their crimes? they were his own much more;
But wealth is crime enough to him that's poor."*

This same wealth, which is at all times treason and *less nation* to indigent and rapacious despotism, under all modes of polity, was your temptation to violate property, law, and religion, united in one object. But was the state of France so wretched and undone, that no other resource but rapine remained to preserve its existence? On this point I wish to receive some information. When the states met, was the condition of the finances of France such, that, after œconomising on principles of justice and mercy through all departments, no fair repartition of burthens upon all the orders could possibly restore them? If such an equal imposition would have been sufficient, you well know it might easily have been made. Mr. Necker, in the budget which he laid before the orders assembled at Versailles, made a detailed exposition of the state of the French nation.*

If we give credit to him, it was not necessary to have recourse to any new impositions whatsoever, to put the receipts of France on a balance with its expenses. He stated the permanent charges of all descriptions, including the interest of a new loan of four hundred millions at 531,444,000 livres; the fixed revenue at 475,294,000, making the deficiency 56,150,000, or short of 2,200,000 sterling. But to balance it, he brought forward savings and improvements of revenue (considered as entirely certain) to rather more than the amount of that deficiency; and he concludes with these emphatical words, (p. 39,) "Quel pays, Messieurs, que celui, où, *sans impôts* et avec de simples objects *inapper us*, on peut faire disparoître un deficit qui a fait tant de bruit en Europe." As to the reimbursement,

* The rest of the passage is this——
"Who having spent the treasures of his crown,
Condemns their luxury to feed his own.
And yet this act, to varnish o'er the shame
Of sacrilege, must bear devotion's name.
No crime so bold, but would be understood
A real, or at least a seeming good;
Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the name,
And, free from conscience, is a slave to fame.
Thus he the church at once protects, and spoils:
But princes' swords are sharper than their styles.
And thus to th' ages past he makes amends,
Their charity destroys, their faith defends.
Then did religion in a lazy cell,
In empty aëry contemplation dwell;
And like the block, unmoved lay: but ours,
As much too active, like the stork devours,
Is there no temp'rate region can be known,
Betwixt their frigid, and our torrid zone?
Could we not wake from that lethargic dream,
But to be restless in a worse extreme?
And for that lethargy was there no cure,
But to be cast into a calenture?
Can knowledge have no bound, but must advance
So far, to make us wish for ignorance?
And rather in the dark to grope our way,
Than, led by a false guide, to err, by day?
Who sees these dismal heaps, but would demand,
What barbarous invader sack'd the land?
But when he hears, no Goth, no Turk did bring
This desolation, but a Christian king;
When nothing, but the name of zeal, appears
'Twixt our best actions, and the worst of theirs,
What does he think our sacrilege would spare,
When such th' effects of our devotion are?"
COOPER'S HILL, by Sir JOHN DENHAM.

* Rapport de Mons. le Directeur-General des Finances, fait par ordre du Roi a Versailles. Mai 5, 1789.

the sinking of debt, and the other great objects of public credit and political arrangement indicated in Monsieur Necker's speech, no doubt could be entertained, but that a very moderate and proportioned assessment on the citizens without distinction would have provided for all of them to the fullest extent of their demand.

If this representation of Mons. Necker was false, then the assembly are in the highest degree culpable for having forced the king to accept as his minister, and since the king's deposition, for having employed as *their* minister, a man who had been capable of abusing so notoriously the confidence of his master and their own; in a matter too of the highest moment, and directly appertaining to his particular office. But if the representation was exact (as having always, along with you, conceived a high degree of respect for Mr. Necker, I make no doubt it was) then what can be said in favour of those, who, instead of moderate, reasonable, and general contribution, have in cold blood, and impelled by no necessity, had recourse to a partial and cruel confiscation?

Was that contribution refused on a pretext of privilege, either on the part of the clergy, or on that of the nobility? No, certainly. As to the clergy, they even ran before the wishes of the third order. Previous to the meeting of the states, they had in all their instructions expressly directed their deputies to renounce every immunity, which put them upon a footing distinct from the condition of their fellow subjects. In this renunciation the clergy were even more explicit than the nobility.

But let us suppose that the deficiency had remained at the 56 millions, (or £.2,200,000 sterling,) as at first stated by Mr. Necker. Let us allow that all the resources he opposed to that deficiency were impudent and groundless fictions; and that the assembly (or their lords of articles* at the Jacobins) were from thence justified in laying the whole burthen of that deficiency on the clergy,—yet allowing all this, a necessity of £.2,200,000 sterling will not support a confiscation to the amount of five millions. The imposition of £.2,000,000 on the clergy, as partial, would have been oppressive and unjust, but it would not have been altogether ruinous to those on whom it was imposed; and therefore it would not have answered the real purpose of the managers.

Perhaps persons, unacquainted with the state of France, on hearing the clergy and the noblesse were privileged in point of taxation, may be led to imagine, that previous to the revolution these bodies had contributed nothing to the state. This is a great mistake. They certainly did not contribute equally with each other, nor either of them equally with the commons. They both however contributed largely. Neither nobility nor clergy enjoyed any exemption from the excise on consumable commodities, from duties of custom, or from any of the other numerous indirect impositions, which in France, as well as here, make so very large a proportion of all payments to the public. The nobles paid the capitation. They paid also a land tax, called the twentieth penny, to the height sometimes of three, sometimes of four shillings in the pound; both of them direct impositions of no light nature, and no trivial produce. The clergy of the provinces annexed by conquest to France, (which in extent make about an eighth part of the whole, but in wealth a much larger proportion,) paid likewise to the capitation and the twentieth penny, at the rate paid by the nobility. The clergy in the old provinces did not pay the capitation; but they had redeemed themselves at the expense of about 24 millions, or a little more than a million sterling. They were exempted from the twentieths; but then they made free gifts; they contracted debts for the state; and they were subject to some other charges, the whole computed at about a thirteenth part of their clear income. They ought to have paid annually about forty thousand pounds more, to put them on a par with the contribution of the nobility.

When the terrours of this tremendous proscription hung over the clergy, they made an offer of a contribution, through the archbishop of Aix, which, for its extravagance, ought not to have been accepted. But it was evidently and obviously more advantageous to the public creditor, than any thing which could rationally be promised by the confiscation. Why was it not accepted? The reason is plain—there was no desire that the church should be brought to serve the state. The service of the state was made a pretext to destroy the church. In their way to the destruction of the church they would not scruple to destroy their country: and they have destroyed it. One great end in the project would have been defeated, if the plan of extortion had been adopted in lieu of the

* In the constitution of Scotland, during the Stuart reigns, a committee sat for preparing bills; and none could pass, but those previously approved by them. This committee was called lords of articles.

scheme of confiscation. The new landed interest connected with the new republic, and connected with it for its very being, could not have been created. This was among the reasons why that extravagant ransom was not accepted.

The madness of the project of confiscation, on the plan that was first pretended, soon became apparent. To bring this unwieldy mass of landed property, enlarged by the confiscation of all the vast landed domain of the crown, at once into market, was obviously to defeat the profits proposed by the confiscation, by depreciating the value of those lands, and indeed of all the landed estates throughout France. Such a sudden diversion of all its circulating money from trade to land, must be an additional mischief. What step was taken? Did the assembly, on becoming sensible of the inevitable ill effects of their projected sale, revert to the offers of the clergy? No distress could oblige them to travel in a course which was disgraced by any appearance of justice. Giving over all hopes from a general immediate sale, another project seems to have succeeded. They proposed to take stock in exchange for the church lands. In that project great difficulties arose in equalizing the objects to be exchanged. Other obstacles also presented themselves, which drew them back again upon some project of sale. The municipalities had taken an alarm. They would not hear of transferring the whole plunder of the kingdom to the stockholders in Paris. Many of those municipalities had been (upon system) reduced to the most deplorable indigence. Money was no where to be seen. They were therefore led to the point that was so ardently desired. They panted for a currency of any kind which might revive their perishing industry. The municipalities were then to be admitted to a share in the spoil, which evidently rendered the first scheme (if ever it had been seriously entertained) altogether impracticable. Public exigencies pressed upon all sides. The minister of finance reiterated his call for supply with a most urgent, anxious, and boding voice. Thus pressed on all sides, instead of the first plan of converting their bankers into bishops and abbots, instead of paying the old debt, they contracted a new debt, at three per cent. creating a new paper currency, founded on an eventual sale of the church lands. They issued this paper currency to satisfy in the first instance chiefly the demands made upon them by the *bank of discount*, the great machine, or paper-mill, of their fictitious wealth.

The spoil of the church was now become the only resource of all their operations in finance; the vital principle of all their politics; the sole security for the existence of their power. It was necessary by all, even the most violent means, to put every individual on the same bottom, and to bind the nation in one guilty interest to uphold this act, and the authority of those by whom it was done. In order to force the most reluctant into a participation of their pillage, they rendered their paper circulation compulsory in all payments. Those who consider the general tendency of their schemes to this one object as a centre, and a centre from which afterwards all their measures radiate, will not think that I dwell too long upon this part of the proceedings of the national assembly.

To cut off all appearance of connection between the crown and public justice, and to bring the whole under implicit obedience to the dictators in Paris, the old independent judicature of the parliaments, with all its merits, and all its faults, was wholly abolished. Whilst the parliaments existed, it was evident that the people might some time or other come to resort to them, and rally under the standard of their antient laws. It became however a matter of consideration that the magistrates and officers, in the courts now abolished, *had purchased their places* at a very high rate, for which, as well as for the duty they performed, they received but a very low return of interest. Simple confiscation is a boon only for the clergy;—to the lawyers some appearances of equity are to be observed; and they are to receive compensation to an immense amount. Their compensation becomes part of the national debt, for the liquidation of which there is the one exhaustless fund. The lawyers are to obtain their compensation in this new church paper, which is to march with the new principles of judicature and legislature. The dismissed magistrates are to take their share of martyrdom with the ecclesiastics, or to receive their own property from such a fund, and in such a manner, as all those, who have been seasoned with the antient principles of jurisprudence, and had been the sole guardians of property, must look upon with horrour. Even the clergy are to receive their miserable allowance out of the depreciated paper which is stamped with the indelible character of sacrilege, and with the symbols of their own ruin, or they must starve. So violent an outrage upon credit, property, and liberty, as this compulsory paper currency, has seldom been exhibited by the alliance of bankruptcy and tyranny, at any time, or in any nation.

In the course of all these operations, at length comes out the grand evasion;—that in reality, and in a fair sense, the lands of the church (so far as any thing certain can be gathered from their proceedings) are not to be sold at all. By the late resolutions of the national assembly, they are indeed to be delivered to the highest bidder. But it is to be observed, that *a certain portion only of the purchase money is to be laid down*. A period of twelve years is to be given for the payment of the rest. The philosophic purchasers are therefore, on payment of a sort of fine, to be put instantly into possession of the estate. It becomes in some respects a sort of gift to them; to be held on the feudal tenure of zeal to the new establishment. This project is evidently to let in a body of purchasers without money. The consequence will be, that these purchasers, or rather guarantees, will pay, not only from the rents as they accrue, which might as well be received by the state, but from the spoil of the materials of buildings, from waste in woods, and from whatever money, by hands habituated to the gripings of usury, they can wring from the miserable peasant. He is to be delivered over to the mercenary and arbitrary discretion of men, who will be stimulated to every species of extortion by the growing demands on the growing profits of an estate held under the precarious settlement of a new political system.

When all the frauds, impostures, violences, rapines, burnings, murders, confiscations, compulsory paper currencies, and every description of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and to uphold this revolution, have their natural effect, that is, to shock the moral sentiments of all virtuous and sober minds, the abettors of this philosophic system immediately strain their throats in a declamation against the old monarchical government of France. When they have rendered that deposed power sufficiently black, they then proceed in argument, as if all those who disapprove of their new abuses, must of course be partisans of the old; that those who reprobate their crude and violent schemes of liberty ought to be treated as advocates for servitude. I admit that their necessities do compel them to this base and contemptible fraud. Nothing can reconcile men to their proceedings and projects but the supposition that there is no third option between them and some tyranny as odious as can be furnished by the records of history, or by the invention of poets. This prattling of theirs hardly deserves the name of sophistry. It is nothing but plain impudence. Have these gentlemen never heard, in the whole circle of the worlds of theory and practice, of any thing between the despotism of the monarch and the despotism of the multitude? Have they never heard of a monarchy directed by laws, controlled and balanced by the great hereditary wealth and hereditary dignity of a nation; and both again controlled by a judicious check from the reason and feeling of the people at large acting by a suitable and permanent organ? Is it then impossible that a man may be found who, without criminal ill intention, or pitiable absurdity, shall prefer such a mixed and tempered government to either of the extremes; and who may repute that nation to be destitute of all wisdom and of all virtue, which, having in its choice to obtain such a government with ease, *or rather to confirm it when actually possessed*, thought proper to commit a thousand crimes, and to subject their country to a thousand evils, in order to avoid it? Is it then a truth so universally acknowledged, that a pure democracy is the only tolerable form into which human society can be thrown, that a man is not permitted to hesitate about its merits, without the suspicion of being a friend to tyranny, that is, of being a foe to mankind?

I do not know under what description to class the present ruling authority in France. It affects to be a pure democracy, though I think it in a direct train of becoming shortly a mischievous and ignoble oligarchy. But for the present I admit it to be a contrivance of the nature and effect of what it pretends to. I reprobate no form of government merely upon abstract principles. There may be situations in which the purely democratic form will become necessary. There may be some (very few, and very particularly circumstanced) where it would be clearly desirable. This I do not take to be the case of France, or of any other great country. Until now, we have seen no examples of considerable democracies. The ancients were better acquainted with them. Not being wholly unread in the authors, who had seen the most of those constitutions, and who best understood them, I cannot help concurring with their opinion, that an absolute democracy, no more than absolute monarchy, is to be reckoned among the legitimate forms of government. They think it rather the corruption and degeneracy, than the sound constitution of a republic. If I recollect rightly, Aristotle observes, that a democracy has many striking points of resemblance with a tyranny.* Of this I am certain, that in a democracy, the

* When I wrote this I quoted from memory, after many years had elapsed from my reading

majority of the citizens is capable of exercising the most cruel oppressions upon the minority, whenever strong divisions prevail in that kind of polity, as they often must; and that oppression of the minority will extend to far greater numbers, and will be carried on with much greater fury, than can almost ever be apprehended from the dominion of a single sceptre. In such a popular persecution, individual sufferers are in a much more deplorable condition than in any other. Under a cruel prince they have the balmy compassion of mankind to assuage the smart of their wounds; they have the plaudits of the people to animate their generous constancy under their sufferings but those who are subjected to wrong under multitudes, are deprived of all external consolation. They seem deserted by mankind; overpowered by a conspiracy of their whole species.

But admitting democracy not to have that inevitable tendency to party tyranny, which I suppose it to have, and admitting it to possess as much good in it when unmixed, as I am sure it possesses when compounded with other forms; does monarchy, on its part, contain nothing at all to recommend it? I do not often quote Bolingbroke, nor have his works in general left any permanent impression on my mind. He is a presumptuous and a superficial writer. But he has one observation, which, in my opinion, is not without depth and solidity. He says, that he prefers a monarchy to other governments; because you can better ingraft any description of republic on a monarchy than any thing of monarchy upon the republican forms. I think him perfectly in the right. The fact is so historically; and it agrees well with the speculation.

the passage. A learned friend has found it, and it is as follows:

Το ηθος το αυτο, και αμφω δεσποτικα των βελτιονων, και τα ψηφισματα, ωσπερ εκει τα επιταγματα και ο δημαγωγος και ο κολαξ, οι αυτοι και αναλογοι και μαλιστα εκατεροι παρ' εκατεροις ισχυουσιν, οι μεν κολακες παρα τυραννοις, οι δε δημαγωγοι παρα τοις δημοις τοις τοιουτοις—.

"The ethical character is the same; both exercise despotism over the better class of citizens; and decrees are in the one, what ordinances and arrêts are in the other: the demagogue too, and the court favourite, are not unfrequently the same identical men, and always bear a close analogy; and these have the principal power, each in their respective forms of government, favourites with the absolute monarch, and demagogues with a people such as I have described."—Arist. Politic. lib. iv. cap. 4.

I know how easy a topic it is to dwell on the faults of departed greatness. By a revolution in the state, the fawning sycophant of yesterday is converted into the austere critic of the present hour. But steady independent minds, when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as government, under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of satirists and declaimers. They will judge of human institutions as they do of human characters. They will sort out the good from the evil, which is mixed in mortal institutions as it is in mortal men.

Your government in France, though usually, and I think justly, reputed the best of the unqualified or ill-qualified monarchies, was still full of abuses. These abuses accumulated in a length of time, as they must accumulate in every monarchy not under the constant inspection of a popular representative. I am no stranger to the faults and defects of the subverted government of France; and I think I am not inclined by nature or policy to make a panegyric upon any thing which is a just and natural object of censure. But the question is not now of the vices of that monarchy, but of its existence. Is it then true, that the French government was such as to be incapable or undeserving of reform; so that it was of absolute necessity the whole fabric should be at once pulled down, and the area cleared for the erection of a theoretic experimental edifice in its place? All France was of a different opinion in the beginning of the year 1789. The instructions to the representatives to the states-general, from every district in that kingdom, were filled with projects for the reformation of that government, without the remotest suggestion of a design to destroy it. Had such a design been then even insinuated, I believe there would have been but one voice, and that voice for rejecting it with scorn and horrour. Men have been sometimes led by degrees, sometimes hurried, into things of which, if they could have seen the whole together, they never would have permitted the most remote approach. When those instructions were given, there was no question but that abuses existed, and that they demanded a reform; nor is there now. In the interval between the instructions and the revolution, things changed their shape; and in consequence of that change, the true question at present is, Whether those who would have reformed, or those who have destroyed, are in the right?

To hear some men speak of the late monarchy of France, you would imagine that they were talking of Persia bleeding under the fero-

cious sword of Tahmas Kouli Khân; or at least, describing the barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries in the most genial climates in the world are wasted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war; where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer. Was this the case of France? I have no way of determining the question but by a reference to facts. Facts do not support this resemblance. Along with much evil, there is some good in monarchy itself; and some corrective to its evil from religion, from laws, from manners, from opinions, the French monarchy must have received; which rendered it (though by no means a free, and therefore by no means a good constitution) a despotism rather in appearance than in reality.

Among the standards upon which the effects of government on any country are to be estimated, I must consider the state of its population as not the least certain. No country in which population flourishes, and is in progressive improvement, can be under a very mischievous government. About sixty years ago, the Intendants of the generalities of France made, with other matters, a report of the population of their several districts. I have not the books, which are very voluminous, by me, nor do I know where to procure them, (I am obliged to speak by memory, and therefore the less positively,) but I think the population of France, was by them, even at that period, estimated at twenty-two millions of souls. At the end of the last century it had been generally calculated at eighteen. On either of these estimations, France was not ill peopled. Mr. Necker, who is an authority for his own time at least equal to the Intendant for theirs, reckons, and upon apparently sure principles, the people of France, in the year 1780, at twenty-four millions six hundred and seventy thousand. But was this the probable ultimate term under the old establishment? Dr. Price is of opinion, that the growth of population in France was by no means at its *acmé* in that year. I certainly defer to Dr. Price's authority a good deal more in these speculations, than I do in his general politics. This gentleman, taking ground on Mr. Necker's data, is very confident that since the period of that minister's calculation, the French population has increased rapidly; so rapidly, that in the year 1789 he will not consent to rate the people of that kingdom at a lower number than thirty millions. After abating much (and much I think ought to be abated) from the sanguine calculation of Dr. Price, I have no doubt that the population of France did increase considerably during this latter period: but supposing that it increased to nothing more than will be sufficient to complete the twenty-four millions six hundred and seventy thousand to twenty-five millions, still a population of twenty-five millions, and that in an increasing progress, on a space of about twenty-seven thousand square leagues, is immense. It is, for instance, a good deal more than the proportionable population of this island, or even than that of England, the best peopled part of the united kingdom.

It is not universally true, that France is a fertile country. Considerable tracts of it are barren, and labour under other natural disadvantages. In the portions of that territory, where things are more favourable, as far as I am able to discover, the numbers of the people correspond to the indulgence of nature.* The Generality of Lisle (this I admit is the strongest example) upon an extent of four hundred and four leagues and a half, about ten years ago, contained seven hundred and thirty-four thousand six hundred souls, which is one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two inhabitants to each square league. The middle term for the rest of France is about nine hundred inhabitants to the same admeasurement.

I do not attribute this population to the deposed government; because I do not like to compliment the contrivances of men with what is due in a great degree to the bounty of Providence. But that decried government could not have obstructed, most probably it favoured, the operation of those causes (whatever they were) whether of nature in the soil, or habits of industry among the people, which has produced so large a number of the species throughout that whole kingdom, and exhibited in some particular places such prodigies of population. I never will suppose that fabric of a state to be the worst of all political institutions, which, by experience, is found to contain a principle favourable (however latent it may be) to the increase of mankind.

The wealth of a country is another, and no contemptible standard, by which we may judge whether, on the whole, a government be protecting or destructive. France far exceeds England in the multitude of her people; but I apprehend that her comparative wealth is much

* De l' Administration des Finances de la France, par Mons. Necker, vol. i. p. 268.

inferiour to ours; that it is not so equal in the distribution, nor so ready in the circulation. I believe the difference in the form of the two governments to be among the causes of this advantage on the side of England. I speak of England, not of the whole British dominions; which, if compared with those of France, will, in some degree, weaken the comparative rate of wealth upon our side. But that wealth, which will not endure a comparison with the riches of England, may constitute a very respectable degree of opulence. Mr. Necker's book, published in 1785,* contains an accurate and interesting collection of facts relative to public œconomy and to political arithmetic; and his speculations on the subject are in general wise and liberal. In that work he gives an idea of the state of France, very remote from the portrait of a country whose government was a perfect grievance, an absolute evil, admitting no cure but through the violent and uncertain remedy of a total revolution. He affirms, that from the year 1726 to the year 1784, there was coined at the mint of France, in the species of gold and silver, to the amount of about one hundred millions of pounds sterling.†

It is impossible that Mr. Necker should be mistaken in the amount of the bullion which has been coined in the mint. It is a matter of official record. The reasonings of this able financier, concerning the quantity of gold and silver which remained for circulation, when he wrote in 1785, that is, about four years before the deposition and imprisonment of the French king, are not of equal certainty; but they are laid on grounds so apparently solid, that it is not easy to refuse a considerable degree of assent to his calculation. He calculates the *numeraire*, or what we call *specie*, then actually existing in France, at about eighty-eight millions of the same English money. A great accumulation of wealth for one country, large as that country is! Mr. Necker was so far from considering this influx of wealth as likely to cease, when he wrote in 1785, that he presumes upon a future annual increase of two per cent. upon the money brought into France during the periods from which he computed.

Some adequate cause must have originally introduced all the money coined at its mint into that kingdom; and some cause as operative must have kept at home, or returned into its bosom, such a vast flood of treasure as Mr. Necker calculates to remain for domestic circulation. Suppose any reasonable deductions from Mr. Necker's computation; the remainder must still amount to an immense sum. Causes thus powerful to acquire and to retain, cannot be found in discouraged industry, insecure property, and a positively destructive government. Indeed, when I consider the face of the kingdom of France; the multitude and opulence of her cities; the useful magnificence of her spacious high roads and bridges; the opportunity of her artificial canals and navigations opening the conveniencies of maritime communication through a solid continent of so immense an extent; when I turn my eyes to the stupendous works of her ports and harbours, and to her whole naval apparatus, whether for war or trade; when I bring before my view the number of her fortifications, constructed with so bold and masterly a skill, and made and maintained at so prodigious a charge, presenting an armed front and impenetrable barrier to her enemies upon every side; when I recollect how very small a part of that extensive region is without cultivation, and to what complete perfection the culture of many of the best productions of the earth have been brought in France; when I reflect on the excellence of her manufactures and fabrics, second to none but ours, and in some particulars not second; when I contemplate the grand foundations of charity, public and private; when I survey the state of all the arts that beautify and polish life; when I reckon the men she has bred for extending her fame in war, her able statesmen, the multitude of her profound lawyers and theologians, her philosophers, her critics, her historians and antiquaries, her poets and her orators, sacred and profane; I behold in all this something which awes and commands the imagination, which checks the mind on the brink of precipitate and indiscriminate censure, and which demands, that we should very seriously examine, what and how great are the latent vices that could authorize us at once to level so spacious a fabric with the ground. I do not recognise, in this view of things, the despotism of Turkey. Nor do I discern the character of a government, that has been, on the whole, so oppressive, or so corrupt, or so negligent, as to be utterly unfit *for all reformation*. I must think such a government well deserved to have its excellencies heightened; its faults corrected; and its capacities improved into a British constitution.

Whoever has examined into the proceedings of that deposed government for several years back, cannot fail to have observed, amid the inconstancy and fluctuation natural to courts,

* De l' Administration des Finances de la France, par Mons. Necker.

† Vol. iii. chap. 8. and chap. 9.

an earnest endeavour towards the prosperity and improvement of the country; he must admit, that it had long been employed, in some instances, wholly to remove, in many considerably to correct, the abusive practices and usuages that had prevailed in the state; and that even the unlimited power of the sovereign over the persons of his subjects, inconsistent, as undoubtedly it was, with law and liberty, had yet been every day growing more mitigated in the exercise. So far from refusing itself to reformation, that government was open, with a censurable degree of facility, to all sorts of projects and projectors on the subject. Rather too much countenance was given to the spirit of innovation, which soon was turned against those who fostered it, and ended in their ruin. It is but cold, and no very flattering justice to that fallen monarchy, to say, that, for many years, it trespassed more by levity and want of judgment in several of its schemes, than from any defect in diligence or in public spirit. To compare the government of France for the last fifteen or sixteen years with wise and well-constituted establishments during that, or during any period, is not to act with fairness. But if in point of prodigality in the expenditure of money, or in point of rigour in the exercise of power, it be compared with any of the former reigns, I believe candid judges will give little credit to the good intentions of those who dwell perpetually on the donations to favourites, or on the expenses of the court, or on the horrours of the Bastile in the reign of Louis the Sixteenth.*

Whether the system, if it deserves such a name, now built on the ruins of that ancient monachy, will be able to give a better account of the population and wealth of the country, which it has taken under its care, is a matter very doubtful. Instead of improving by the change, I apprehend that a long series of years must be told, before it can recover in any degree the effects of this philosophic revolution, and before the nation can be replaced on its former footing. If Dr. Price should think fit, a few years hence, to favour us with an estimate of the population of France, he will hardly be able to make up his tale of thirty millions of souls, as computed in 1789, or the assembly's computation of twenty-six millions of that year; or even Mr. Necker's twenty-five millions in 1780. I hear that there are considerable emigrations from France; and that many quitting that voluptuous climate, and that seductive *Circean* liberty, have taken refuge in the frozen regions, and under the British despotism of Canada.

In the present disappearance of coin, no person could think it the same country, in which the present minister of the finances has been able to discover fourscore millions sterling in specie. From its general aspect one would conclude that it had been for some time past under the special direction of the learned academicians of Laputa and Balnibarbi.† Already the population of Paris has so declined, that Mr. Necker stated to the national assembly the provision to be made for its subsistence at a fifth less than what had formerly been found requisite.‡ It is said (and I have never heard it contradicted) that a hundred thousand people are out of employment in that city, though it is become the seat of the imprisoned court and national assembly. Nothing, I am credibly informed, can exceed the shocking and disgusting spectacle of mendicancy displayed in that capital. Indeed the votes of the national assembly leave no doubt of the fact. They have lately appointed a standing committee of mendicancy. They are contriving at once a vigorous police on this subject, and, for the first time, the imposition of a tax to maintain the poor, for whose present relief great sums appear on the face of the public accounts of the year.§ In the

The world is obliged to Mr. de Calonne for the pains he has taken to refute the scandalous exaggerations relative to some of the royal expenses, and to detect the fallacious account given of pensions, for the wicked purpose of provoking the populace to all sorts of crimes.

† See Gulliver's Travels for the idea of countries governed by philosophers.

‡ Mr. de Calonne states the falling off of the population of Paris as far more considerable; and it may be so, since the period of Mr. Necker's calculation.

§

	Livres.	£.	s.	d.
Travaux de charite pour subvenir au manque de travail a Paris et dans les provinces	3,866,920—	161,121	13	4
Destruction de vagabondage et de la mendicite	1,671,417—	69,642	7	6
Primes pour l'importation de grains	5,671,907—	236,329	9	2
Depenses relatives aux subsistances, deduction fait des recouvrements qui ont eu lieu	39,871,790—	1,661,324	11	8
Total,	51,082,034—	2,128,418	1	8

When I sent this book to the press, I entertained some doubt concerning the nature and extent of the last article in the above accounts, which is only under a general head, without any detail. Since then I have seen Mr. de Calonne's work. I must think it a great loss to me that I had not

mean time the leaders of the legislative clubs and coffee-houses are intoxicated with admiration at their own wisdom and ability. They speak with the most sovereign contempt of the rest of the world. They tell the people, to comfort them in the rags with which they have clothed them, that they are a nation of philosophers; and, sometimes, by all the arts of quackish parade, by show, tumult, and bustle, sometimes by the alarms of plots and invasions, they attempt to drown the cries of indigence, and to divert the eyes of the observer from the ruin and wretchedness of the state. A brave people will certainly prefer liberty, accompanied with a virtuous poverty, to a depraved and wealthy servitude. But before the price of comfort and opulence is paid, one ought to be pretty sure it is real liberty which is purchased, and that she is to be purchased at no other price. I shall always, however, consider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance, which has not wisdom and justice for her companions; and does not lead prosperity and plenty in her train.

The advocates for this revolution, not satisfied with exaggerating the vices of their ancient government, strike at the fame of their country itself, by painting almost all that could have attracted the attention of strangers, I mean their nobility and their clergy, as objects of horrour. If this were only a libel, there had not been much in it. But it has practical consequences. Had your nobility and gentry, who formed the great body of your landed men, and the whole of your military officers, resembled those of Germany, at the period when the Hanse-towns were necessitated to confederate against the nobles in defence of their property—had they been like the *Orsini* and *Vitelli* in Italy, who used to sally from their fortified dens to rob the trader and traveller—had they been such as the *Mamelukes* in Egypt, or the *Nayres* on the coast of Malabar, I do admit, that too critical an inquiry might not be advisable into the means of freeing the world from such a nuisance. The statues of Equity and Mercy might be veiled for a moment. The tenderest minds, confounded with the dreadful exigence in which morality submits to the suspension of its own rules in favour of its own principles, might turn aside whilst fraud and violence were accomplishing the destruction of a pretended nobility which disgraced, whilst it persecuted, human nature. The persons most abhorrent from blood, and treason, and arbitrary confiscation, might remain silent spectators of this civil war between the vices.

But did the privileged nobility who met under the king's precept at Versailles, in 1789, or their constituents, deserve to be looked on as the *Nayres* or *Mamelukes* of this age, or as the *Orsini* and *Vitelli* of ancient times? If I had then asked the question I should have passed for a madman. What have they since done that they were to be driven into exile, that their persons should be hunted about, mangled, and tortured, their families dispersed, their houses laid in ashes, and that their order should be abolished, and the memory of it, if possible, extinguished, by ordaining them to change the very names by which they were usually known? Read their instructions to their representatives. They breathe the spirit of liberty as warmly, and they recommend reformation as strongly, as any other order. Their privileges relative to contribution were voluntarily surrendered; as the king from the beginning, surrendered all pretence to a right of taxation. Upon a free constitution there was but one opinion in France. The absolute monarchy was at an end. It breathed its last, without a groan, without struggle, without convulsion. All the struggle, all the dissension arose afterwards upon the preference of a despotic democracy to a government of reciprocal controul. The triumph of the victorious party was over the principles of a British constitution.

I have observed the affectation, which, for many years past, has prevailed in Paris even to a degree perfectly childish, of idolizing the memory of your Henry the Fourth. If any thing could put one out of humour with that ornament to the kingly character, it would be this overdone style of insidious panegyric. The persons who have worked this engine the most busily, are those who have ended their panegyrics in dethroning his successor and descendant; a man, as good-natured at the least, as Henry the Fourth; altogether as fond of his people; and who has done infinitely more

that advantage earlier. Mr. de Calonne thinks this article to be on account of general subsistence; but as he is not able to comprehend how so great a loss as upwards of £.1,661,000 sterling could be sustained on the difference between the price and the sale of grain, he seems to attribute this enormous head of charge to secret expenses of the revolution. I cannot say any thing positively on that subject. The reader is capable of judging, by the aggregate of these immense charges, on the state and condition of France; and the system of public œconomy adopted in that nation. These articles of account produced no inquiry or discussion in the national assembly.

to correct the ancient vices of the state than that great monarch did, or we are sure he ever meant to do. Well it is for his panegyrists that they have not him to deal with. For Henry of Navarre was a resolute, active, and politic prince. He possessed indeed great humanity and mildness; but an humanity and mildness that never stood in the way of his interests. He never sought to be loved without putting himself first in a condition to be feared. He used soft language with determined conduct. He asserted and maintained his authority in the gross, and distributed his acts of concession only in the detail. He spent the income of his prerogative nobly; but he took care not to break in upon the capital; never abandoning for a moment any of the claims, which he made under the fundamental laws, nor sparing to shed the blood of those who opposed him, often in the field, sometimes upon the scaffold. Because he knew how to make his virtues respected by the ungrateful, he has merited the praises of those, whom, if they had lived in his time, he would have shut up in the Bastile, and brought to punishment along with the regicides whom he hanged after he had famished Paris into a surrender.

If these panegyrists are in earnest in their admiration of Henry the Fourth, they must remember, that they cannot think more highly of him, than he did of the noblesse of France; whose virtue, honour, courage, patriotism, and loyalty were his constant theme.

But the nobility of France are degenerated since the days of Henry the Fourth. This is possible. But it is more than I can believe to be true in any great degree. I do not pretend to know France as correctly as some others; but I have endeavoured through my whole life to make myself acquainted with human nature: otherwise I should be unfit to take even my humble part in the service of mankind. In that study I could not pass by a vast portion of our nature, as it appeared modified in a country but twenty-four miles from the shore of this island. On my best observation, compared with my best inquiries, I found your nobility for the greater part composed of men of a high spirit, and of a delicate sense of honour, both with regard to themselves individually, and with regard to their whole corps, over whom they kept, beyond what is common in other countries, a censorial eye. They were tolerably well-bred; very officious, humane, and hospitable; in their conversation frank and open; with a good military tone; and reasonably tinctured with literature, particularly of the authors in their own language. Many had pretensions far above this description. I speak of those who were generally met with.

As to their behaviour to the inferior classes, they appeared to me to comport themselves towards them with good-nature, and with something more nearly approaching to familiarity, than is generally practised with us in the intercourse between the higher and lower ranks of life. To strike any person, even in the most abject condition, was a thing in a manner unknown, and would be highly disgraceful. Instances of other ill-treatment of the humble part of the community were rare; and as to attacks made upon property or the personal liberty of the commons, I never heard of any whatsoever from them; nor, whilst the laws were in vigour under the ancient government, would such tyranny in subjects have been permitted. As men of landed estates, I had no fault to find with their conduct, though much to reprehend, and much to wish changed, in many of the old tenures. Where the letting of their land was by rent, I could not discover that their agreements with their farmers were oppressive; nor when they were in partnership with the farmer, as often was the case, have I heard that they had taken the lion's share. The proportions seemed not inequitable. There might be exceptions; but certainly they were exceptions only. I have no reason to believe that in these respects the landed noblesse of France were worse than the landed gentry of this country; certainly in no respect more vexatious than the landholders, not noble, of their own nation. In cities the nobility had no manner of power; in the country very little. You know, Sir, that much of the civil government, and the police in the most essential parts, was not in the hands of that nobility which presents itself first to our consideration. The revenue, the system and collection of which were the most grievous parts of the French government, was not administered by the men of the sword; nor were they answerable for the vices of its principle, or the vexations, where any such existed, in its management.

Denying, as I am well warranted to do, that the nobility had any considerable share in the oppression of the people, in cases in which real oppression existed, I am ready to admit that they were not without considerable faults and errours. A foolish imitation of the worst part of the manners of England, which impaired their natural character, without substituting in its place what perhaps they meant to copy, has certainly rendered them worse than formerly they were. Habitual dissolute[illegible] of manners

continued beyond the pardonable period of life, was more common among them than it is with us; and it reigned with the less hope of remedy, though possibly with something of less mischief, by being covered with more exterior decorum. They countenanced too much that licentious philosophy which has helped to bring on their ruin. There was another errour among them more fatal. Those of the commons, who approached to or exceeded many of the nobility in point of wealth, were not fully admitted to the rank and estimation which wealth, in reason and good policy, ought to bestow in every country; though I think not equally with that of other nobility. The two kinds of aristocracy were too punctiliously kept asunder; less so, however, than in Germany and some other nations.

This separation, as I have already taken the liberty of suggesting to you, I conceive to be one principal cause of the destruction of the old nobility. The military, particularly, was too exclusively reserved for men of family. But, after all, this was an errour of opinion, which a conflicting opinion would have rectified. A permanent assembly, in which the commons had their share of power, would soon abolish whatever was too invidious and insulting in these distinctions; and even the faults in the morals of the nobility would have been probably corrected, by the greater varieties of occupation and pursuit to which a constitution by orders would have given rise.

All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horrour and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him, and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. It operates as an instinct to secure property, and to preserve communities in a settled state. What is there to shock in this? Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society. *Omnes boni nobilitati semper favemus* was the saying of a wise and good man. It is indeed one sign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline to it with some sort of partial propensity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart, who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representation of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour. I do not like to see any thing destroyed; any void produced in society; any ruin on the face of the land. It was therefore with no disappointment or dissatisfaction that my inquiries and observations did not present to me any incorrigible vices in the noblesse of France, or any abuse which could not be removed by a reform very short of abolition. Your noblesse did not deserve punishment; but to degrade is to punish.

It was with the same satisfaction I found that the result of my inquiry concerning your clergy was not dissimilar. It is no soothing news to my ears, that great bodies of men are incurably corrupt. It is not with much credulity I listen to any, when they speak evil of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness: a robber is a worse. Vices and abuses there were undoubtedly in that order, and must be. It was an old establishment, and not frequently revised. But I saw no crimes in the individuals that merited confiscation of their substance, nor those cruel insults and degradations, and that unnatural persecution which have been substituted in the place of meliorating regulation.

If there had been any just cause for this new religious persecution, the atheistic libellers, who act as trumpeters to animate the populace to plunder, do not love any body so much as not to dwell with complacence on the vices of the existing clergy. This they have not done. They find themselves obliged to rake into the histories of former ages (which they have ransacked with a malignant and profligate industry) for every instance of oppression and persecution which has been made by that body or in its favour, in order to justify, upon very iniquitous, because very illogical principles of retaliation, their own persecutions, and their own cruelties. After destroying all other genealogies and family distinctions, they invent a sort of pedigree of crimes. It is not very just to chastise men for the offences of their natural ancestors; but to take the fiction of ancestry in a corporate succession, as a ground for punishing men who have no relation to guilty acts, except in names and general descriptions, is a sort of refinement in injustice belonging to the philosophy of this enlightened

age. The assembly punishes men, many, if not most, of whom abhor the violent conduct of ecclesiastics in former times as much as their present persecutors can do, and who would be as loud and as strong in the expression of that sense, if they were not well aware of the purposes for which all this declamation is employed.

Corporate bodies are immortal for the good of the members, but not for their punishment. Nations themselves are such corporations. As well might we in England think of waging inexpiable war upon all Frenchmen for the evils which they have brought upon us in the several periods of our mutual hostilities. You might, on your part, think yourselves justified in falling upon all Englishmen on account of the unparalleled calamities brought upon the people of France by the unjust invasions of our Henries and our Edwards. Indeed we should be mutually justified in this exterminatory war upon each other, full as much as you are in the unprovoked persecution of your present countrymen, on account of the conduct of men of the same name in other times.

We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without care it may be used to vitiate our minds and to destroy our happiness. In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errours and infirmities of mankind. It may, in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supplying the means of keeping alive, or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites, which shake the public with the same

"troublous storms that toss
The private state, and render life unsweet."

These vices are the *causes* of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pretexts*. The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good. You would not secure men from tyranny and sedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply? If you did, you would root out every thing that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by resolving, that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the gospel; no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public council. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain quantum of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. Wise men will apply their remedies to vice, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Sekins have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad; it continues its ravages; whilst you are gibbeting the carcase, or demolishing the tomb. You are terrifying yourselves with ghosts and apparitions, whilst your house is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all those, who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorizing and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.

Your citizens of Paris formerly had lent themselves as the ready instruments to slaughter the followers of Calvin, at the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew. What should we say to those who could think of retaliating on the Parisians of this day the abominations and horrours of that time? They are indeed brought to abhor *that* massacre. Ferocious as they are, it is not difficult to make them dislike it; because the politicians and fashionable teachers have no interest in giving their passions exactly the same direction. Still however they find it their interest to keep the same savage dispositions alive. It was but the other day that they caused this very massacre to be acted on the stage for the diversion of the descendants of those who committed it. In this tragic farce they produced the cardinal of Lorraine in his robes of function, ordering general slaughter. Was this spectacle intended to make the Parisians abhor persecution,

and loath the effusion of blood?—No; it was to teach them to persecute their own pastors; it was to excite them, by raising a disgust and horrour of their clergy, to an alacrity in hunting down to destruction an order, which, if it ought to exist at all, ought to exist not only in safety, but in reverence. It was to stimulate their cannibal appetites (which one would think had been gorged sufficiently) by variety and seasoning; and to quicken them to an alertness in new murders and massacres, if it should suit the purpose of the Guises of the day. An assembly, in which sat a multitude of priests and prelates, was obliged to suffer this indignity at its door. The author was not sent to the gallies, nor the players to the house of correction. Not long after this exhibition, those players came forward to the assembly to claim the rites of that very religion which they had dared to expose, and to shew their prostituted faces in the senate, whilst the arch-bishop of Paris, whose function was known to his people only by his prayers and benedictions, and his wealth only by alms, is forced to abandon his house, and to fly from his flock (as from ravenous wolves) because, truly, in the sixteenth century, the cardinal of Lorraine was a rebel and a murderer.*

Such is the effect of the perversion of history, by those, who, for the same nefarious purposes, have perverted every other part of learning. But those who will stand upon that elevation of reason, which places centuries under our eye, and brings things to the true point of comparison, which obscures little names, and effaces the colours of little parties, and to which nothing can ascend but the spirit and moral quality of human actions, will say, to the teachers of the Palais Royal,—the cardinal of Lorraine was the murderer of the sixteenth century, you have the glory of being the murderers in the eighteenth; and this is the only difference between you. But history, in the nineteenth century, better understood, and better employed, will, I trust, teach a civilized posterity to abhor the misdeeds of both these barbarous ages. It will teach future priests and magistrates not to retaliate upon the speculative and inactive atheists of future times, the enormities committed by the present practical zealots and furious fanatics of that wretched errour, which, in its quiescent state, is more than punished, whenever it is embraced. It will teach posterity not to make war upon either religion or philosophy, for the abuse which the hypocrites of both have made of the two most valuable blessings conferred upon us by the bounty of the universal Patron, who in all things eminently favours and protects the race of man.

If your clergy, or any clergy, should shew themselves vicious beyond the fair bounds allowed to human infirmity, and to those professional faults which can hardly be separated from professional virtues, though their vices never can countenance the exercise of oppression, I do admit, that they would naturally have the effect of abating very much of our indignation against the tyrants who exceed measure and justice in their punishment. I can allow in clergymen, through all their divisions, some tenaciousness of their own opinion; some overflowings of zeal for its propagation; some predilection to their own state and office; some attachment to the interest of their own corps; some preference to those who listen with docility to their doctrines, beyond those who scorn and deride them. I allow all this, because I am a man who have to deal with men, and who would not, through a violence of toleration, run into the greatest of all intolerance. I must bear with infirmities until they fester into crimes.

Undoubtedly, the natural progress of the passions, from frailty to vice, ought to be prevented by a watchful eye and a firm hand. But is it true that the body of your clergy had past those limits of a just allowance? From the general style of your late publications of all sorts, one would be led to believe that your clergy in France were a sort of monsters; an horrible composition of superstition, ignorance, sloth, fraud, avarice, and tyranny. But is this true? Is it true, that the lapse of time, the cessation of conflicting interests, the woeful experience of the evils resulting from party rage, have had no sort of influence gradually to meliorate their minds? Is it true, that they were daily renewing invasions on the civil power, troubling the domestic quiet of their country, and rendering the operations of its government feeble and precarious? Is it true, that the clergy of our times have pressed down the laity with an iron hand, and were, in all places, lighting up the fires of a savage persecution? Did they by every fraud endeavour to increase their estates? Did they use to exceed the due demands on estates that were their own? Or, rigidly screwing up right into wrong, did they convert a legal claim into a vexatious extortion? When not

* This is on a supposition of the truth of this story; but he was not in France at the time. One name serves as well as another.

possessed of power, were they filled with the vices of those who envy it? Were they enflamed with a violent litigious spirit of controversy? Goaded on with the ambition of intellectual sovereignty, were they ready to fly in the face of all magistracy, to fire churches, to massacre the priests of other descriptions, to pull down altars, and to make their way over the ruins of subverted governments to an empire of doctrine, sometimes flattering, sometimes forcing the consciences of men from the jurisdiction of public institutions into a submission to their personal authority, beginning with a claim of liberty and ending with an abuse of power?

These, or some of these, were the vices objected, and not wholly without foundation, to several of the churchmen of former times, who belonged to the two great parties which then divided and distracted Europe.

If there was in France, as in other countries there visibly is, a great abatement, rather than any increase of these vices, instead of leading the present clergy with the crimes of other men, and the odious character of other times, in common equity they ought to be praised, encouraged, and supported, in their departure from a spirit which disgraced their predecessors, and for having assumed a temper of mind and manners more suitable to their sacred function.

When my occasions took me into France, towards the close of the late reign, the clergy, under all their forms, engaged a considerable part of my curiosity. So far from finding (except from one set of men, not then very numerous though very active) the complaints and discontents against that body, which some publications had given me reason to expect, I perceive little or no public or private uneasiness on their account. On further examination, I found the clergy in general, persons of moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the seculars, and the regulars of both sexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy; but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With some of the higher clergy I had a personal acquaintance; and of the rest in that class, a very good means of information. They were, almost all of them, persons of noble birth. They resembled others of their own rank; and where there was any difference, it was in their favour. They were more fully educated than the military noblesse; so as by no means to disgrace their profession by ignorance, or by want of fitness for the exercise of their authority. They seemed to me, beyond the clerical character, liberal and open; with the hearts of gentlemen, and men of honour; neither insolent nor servile in their manners and conduct. They seemed to me rather a superiour class; a set of men, among whom you would not be surprised to find a *Fenelon*. I saw among the clergy in Paris (many of the description are not to be met with any where) men of great learning and candour; and I had reason to believe, that this description was not confined to Paris. What I found in other places, I knew was accidental; and therefore to be presumed a fair sample. I spent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the absence of the bishop, I passed my evenings with three clergymen, his vicars-general, persons who would have done honour to any church. They were all well informed; two of them of deep, general, and extensive erudition, ancient and modern, oriental and western; particularly in their own profession. They had a more extensive knowledge of our English divines than I expected; and they entered into the genius of those writers with a critical accuracy. One of these gentlemen is since dead, the Abbé *Morange*. I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent person; and I should do the same, with equal cheerfulness, to the merits of the others, who I believe are still living, if I did not fear to hurt those whom I am unable to serve.

Some of these ecclesiastics, of rank, are, by all titles, persons deserving of general respect. They are deserving of gratitude from me, and from many English. If this letter should ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe there are those of our nation who feel for their unmerited fall, and for the cruel confiscation of their fortunes, with no common sensibility. What I say of them is a testimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth. Whenever the question of this unnatural persecution is concerned, I will pay it. No one shall prevent me from being just and grateful. The time is fitted for the duty; and it is particularly becoming to shew our justice and gratitude, when those who have deserved well of us and of mankind are labouring under popular obloquy and the persecutions of oppressive power.

You had before your revolution about an hundred and twenty bishops. A few of them were men of eminent sanctity, and charity without limit. When we talk of the heroic, of course we talk of rare, virtue. I believe the

instances of eminent depravity may be as rare among them as those of transcendant goodness. Examples of avarice and of licentiousness may be picked out, I do not question it, by those who delight in the investigation which leads to such discoveries. A man, as old as I am, will not be astonished that several, in every description, do not lead that perfect life of self-denial, with regard to wealth or to pleasure, which is wished for by all, by some expected, but by none exacted with more rigour, than by those who are the most attentive to their own interests, or the most indulgent to their own passions. When I was in France, I am certain that the number of vicious prelates was not great. Certain individuals among them, not distinguishable for the regularity of their lives, made some amends for their want of the severe virtues, in their possession of the liberal; and were endowed with qualities which made them useful in the church and state. I am told, that with few exceptions, Louis the Sixteenth had been more attentive to character, in his promotions to that rank, than his immediate predecessor; and I believe (as some spirit of reform has prevailed through the whole reign) that it may be true. But the present ruling power has shewn a disposition only to plunder the church. It has punished *all* prelates; which is to favour the vicious, at least in point of reputation. It has made a degrading pensionary establishment, to which no man of liberal ideas or liberal condition will destine his children. It must settle into the lowest classes of the people. As with you the inferiour clergy are not numerous enough for their duties; as these duties are, beyond measure, minute and toilsome; as you have left no middle classes of clergy at their ease, in future nothing of science or erudition can exist in the Gallican church. To complete the project, without the least attention to the rights of patrons, the assembly has provided in future an elective clergy; an arrangement which will drive out of the clerical profession all men of sobriety; all who can pretend to independence in their function or their conduct; and which will throw the whole direction of the public mind into the hands of a set of licentious, bold, crafty, factious, flattering wretches, of such condition and such habits of life as will make their contemptible pensions (in comparison of which the stipend of an exciseman is lucrative and honourable) an object of low and illiberal intrigue. Those officers, whom they still call bishops, are to be elected to a provision comparatively mean, through the same arts, (that is, electioneering arts,) by men of all religious tenets that are known or can be invented. The new lawgivers have not ascertained any thing whatsoever concerning their qualifications, relative either to doctrine or to morals; no more than they have done with regard to the subordinate clergy; nor does it appear but that both the higher and the lower may, at their discretion, practise or preach any mode of religion or irreligion that they please. I do not yet see what the jurisdiction of bishops over their subordinates is to be; or whether they are to have any jurisdiction at all.

In short, Sir, it seems to me, that this new ecclesiastical establishment is intended only to be temporary, and preparatory to the utter abolition, under any of its forms, of the Christian religion, whenever the minds of men are prepared for this last stroke against it, by the accomplishment of the plan for bringing its ministers into universal contempt. They who will not believe, that the philosophical fanatics who guide in these matters, have long entertained such a design, are utterly ignorant of their character and proceedings. These enthusiasts do not scruple to avow their opinion, that a state can subsist without any religion better than with one; and that they are able to supply the place of any good which may be in it, by a project of their own—namely, by a sort of education they have imagined, founded in a knowledge of the physical wants of men; progressively carried to an enlightened self-interest, which, when well understood, they tell us, will identify with an interest more enlarged and public. The scheme of this education has been long known. Of late they distinguish it (as they have got an intire new nomenclature of technical terms) by the name of a *Civic Education*.

I hope their partisans in England (to whom I rather attribute very inconsiderate conduct than the ultimate object in this detestable design) will succeed neither in the pillage of the ecclesiastics, nor in the introduction of a principle of popular election to our bishoprics and parochial cures. This, in the present condition of the world, would be the last corruption of the church; the utter ruin of a clerical character; the most dangerous shock that the state ever received through a misunderstood arrangement of religion. I know well enough that the bishoprics and cures, under kingly and seignoral patronage, as now they are in England, and as they have been lately in France, are sometimes acquired by unworthy methods; but the other mode of ecclesiastical canvass subjects them infinitely more surely and more generally to all the evil arts of low ambition,

which, operating on and through great numbers, will produce mischief in proportion.

Those of you who have robbed the clergy, think that they shall easily reconcile their conduct to all protestant nations; because the clergy, whom they have thus plundered, degraded, and given over to mockery and scorn, are of the Roman Catholic, that is, of *their own* pretended persuasion. I have no doubt that some miserable bigots will be found here as well as elsewhere, who hate sects and parties different from their own, more than they love the substance of religion; and who are more angry with those who differ from them in their particular plans and systems, than displeased with those who attack the foundation of our common hope. These men will write and speak on the subject in the manner that is to be expected from their temper and character. Burnet says, that when he was in France, in the year 1683, "the method which carried over the men of the finest parts to popery was this——they brought themselves to doubt of the whole Christian religion. When that was once done, it seemed a more indifferent thing of what side or form they continued outwardly." If this was then the ecclesiastic policy of France, it is what they have since but too much reason to repent of. They preferred atheism to a form of religion not agreeable to their ideas. They succeeded in destroying that form; and atheism has succeeded in destroying them. I can readily give credit to Burnet's story, because I have observed too much of a similar spirit (for a little of it is "much too much") among ourselves. The humour, however, is not general.

The teachers who reformed our religion in England bore no sort of resemblance to your present reforming doctors in Paris. Perhaps they were (like those whom they opposed) rather more than could be wished under the influence of a party spirit; but they were most sincere believers; men of the most fervent and exalted piety; ready to die (as some of them did die) like true heroes in defence of their particular ideas of Christianity; as they would with equal fortitude, and more cheerfully, for that stock of general truth, for the branches of which they contended with their blood. These men would have disavowed with horrour those wretches who claimed a fellowship with them upon no other titles than those of their having pillaged the persons with whom they maintained controversies, and their having despised the common religion, for the purity of which they exerted themselves with a zeal, which unequivocally bespoke their highest reverence for the substance of that system which they wished to reform. Many of their descendants have retained the same zeal, but (as less engaged in conflict) with more moderation. They do not forget that justice and mercy are substantial parts of religion. Impious men do not recommend themselves to their communion by iniquity and cruelty towards any description of their fellow-creatures.

We heard these new teachers continually boasting of their spirit of toleration. That those persons should tolerate all opinions, who think none to be of estimation, is a matter of small merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindness. The species of benevolence, which arises from contempt, is no true charity. There are in England abundance of men who tolerate in the true spirit of toleration. They think the dogmas of religion, though in different degrees, are all of moment; and that among them there is, as among all things of value, a just ground of preference. They favour, therefore, and they tolerate. They tolerate, not because they despise opinions, but because they respect justice. They would reverently and affectionately protect all religions, because they love and venerate the great principle upon which they all agree, and the great object to which they are all directed. They begin more and more plainly to discern, that we have all a common cause, as against a common enemy. They will not be so misled by the spirit of faction, as not to distinguish what is done in favour of their subdivision, from those acts of hostility, which, through some particular description, are aimed at the whole corps, in which they themselves, under another denomination, are included. It is impossible for me to say what may be the character of every description of men among us. But I speak for the greater part; and for them, I must tell you, that sacrilege is no part of their doctrine of good works; that, so far from calling you into their fellowship on such title, if your professors are admitted to their communion, they must carefully conceal their doctrine of the lawfulness of the proscription of innocent men; and that they must make restitution of all stolen goods whatsoever. Till then they are none of ours.

You may suppose that we do not approve your confiscation of the revenues of bishops, and deans, and chapters, and parochial clergy, possessing independent estates arising from land, because we have the same sort of establishment in England. That objection, you will say, cannot hold as to the confiscation of the goods of monks and nuns, and the abolition

of their order. It is true that this particular part of your general confiscation does not affect England, as a precedent in point: but the reason applies, and it goes a great way. The long parliament confiscated the lands of deans and chapters in England on the same ideas upon which your assembly set to sale the lands of the monastic orders. But it is in the principle of injustice that the danger lies, and not in the description of persons on whom it is first exercised. I see, in a country very near us, a course of policy pursued, which sets justice, the common concern of mankind, at defiance. With the national assembly of France, possession is nothing, law and usage are nothing. I see the national assembly openly reprobate the doctrine of prescription, which one of the greatest of their own lawyers* tells us, with great truth, is a part of the law of nature. He tells us, that the positive ascertainment of its limits, and its security from invasion, were among the causes for which civil society itself has been instituted. If prescription be once shaken, no species of property is secure, when it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of indigent power. I see a practice perfectly correspondent to their contempt of this great fundamental part of natural law. I see the confiscators begin with bishops, and chapters, and monasteries; but I do not see them end there. I see the princes of the blood, who, by the oldest usages of that kingdom, held large landed estates, (hardly with the compliment of a debate,) deprived of their possessions, and in lieu of their stable independent property, reduced to the hope of some precarious, charitable pension, at the pleasure of an assembly, which of course will pay little regard to the rights of pensioners at pleasure, when it despises those of legal proprietors. Flushed with the insolence of their first inglorious victories, and pressed by the distresses caused by the lust of unhallowed lucre, disappointed but not discouraged, they have at length ventured completely to subvert all property of all descriptions throughout the extent of a great kingdom. They have compelled all men, in all transactions of commerce, in the disposal of lands, in civil dealing, and through the whole communion of life to accept a perfect payment and good and lawful tender, the symbols of their speculations on a projected sale of their plunder. What vestiges of liberty or property have they left? The tenant-right of a cabbage garden, a year's interest in a hovel, the good-will of an alehouse or a baker's shop, the very shadow of a constructive property, are more ceremoniously treated in our parliament than with you the oldest and most valuable landed possessions, in the hands of the most respectable personages, or than the whole body of the monied and commercial interest of your country. We entertain a high opinion of the legislative authority; but we have never dreamt that parliaments had any right whatever to violate property, to over-rule prescription, or to force a currency of their own fiction in the place of that which is real, and recognized by the law of nations. But you, who began with refusing to submit to the most moderate restraints, have ended by establishing an unheard-of despotism. I find the ground upon which your confiscators go is this; that indeed their proceedings could not be supported in a court of justice; but that the rules of prescription cannot bind a legislative assembly.* So that this legislative assembly of a free nation sits, not for the security, but for the destruction of property, and not of property only, but of every rule and maxim which can give it stability, and of those instruments which can alone give it circulation.

When the anabaptists of Munster, in the sixteenth century, had filled Germany with confusion, by their system of levelling, and their wild opinions concerning property, to what country in Europe did not the progress of their fury furnish just cause of alarm? Of all things, wisdom is the most terrified with epidemical fanaticism, because of all enemies it is that against which she is the least able to furnish any kind of resource. We cannot be ignorant of the spirit of atheistical fanaticism, that is inspired by a multitude of writings, dispersed with incredible assiduity and expense, and by sermons delivered in all the streets and places of public resort in Paris. These writings and sermons have filled the populace with a black and savage atrocity of mind, which supersedes in them the common feelings of nature, as well as all sentiments of morality and religion; insomuch that these wretches are induced to bear with a sullen patience the intolerable distresses brought upon them by the violent convulsions and permutations that have been made in property.† The spirit of pro-

* Domat.

* Speech of Mr. Camus, published by order of the national assembly.

† Whether the following description is strictly true I know not; but it is what the publishers would have pass for true, in order to animate others. In a letter from Toul, given in one of their papers, is the following passage concerning

selytism attends this spirit of fanaticism. They have societies to cabal and correspond at home and abroad for the propagation of their tenets. The republic of Berne, one of the happiest, the most prosperous, and the best governed countries upon earth, is one of the great objects, at the destruction of which they aim. I am told they have in some measure succeeded in sowing there the seeds of discontent. They are busy throughout Germany. Spain and Italy have not been untried. England is not left out of the comprehensive scheme of their malignant charity; and in England we find those who stretch out their arms to them, who recommend their example from more than one pulpit, and who choose, in more than one periodical meeting, publicly to correspond with them, to applaud them, and to hold them up as objects for imitation; who receive from them tokens of confraternity, and standards consecrated amid their rites and mysteries;* who suggest to them leagues of perpetual amity, at the very time when the power, to which our constitution, has exclusively delegated the federative capacity of this kingdom, may find it expedient to make war upon them.

It is not the confiscation of our church property from this example in France that I dread, though I think this would be no trifling evil. The great source of my solicitude is, lest it should ever be considered in England as the policy of a state to seek a resource in confiscations of any kind; or that any one description of citizens should be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey.* Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundless debt. Public debts which at first were a security to governments, by interesting many in the public tranquillity, are likely in their excess to become the means of their subversion. If governments provide for these debts by heavy impositions, they perish by becoming odious to the people. If they do not provide for them, they will be undone by the efforts of the most dangerous of all parties; I mean an extensive discontented monied interest, injured and not destroyed. The men who compose this interest look for their security, in the first instance, to the fidelity of government; in the second, to its power. If they find the old governments effete, worn out, and with their springs relaxed, so as not to be of sufficient vigour for their purposes, they may seek new ones that shall be possessed of more energy; and this energy will be derived, not from an acquisition of resources, but from a contempt of justice. Revolutions are favourable to confiscation; and it is impossible to know under what obnoxious names the next confiscations will be authorized. I am sure that the principles predominant in France extend to very many persons and descriptions of persons in all countries who think their innoxious indolence their security. This kind of innocence in proprietors may be argued into inutility; and inutility into an unfitness for their estates. Many parts of Europe are in

the people of that district: "Dans la revolution actuelle, ils ont resiste a toutes les *seductions du bigotisme, aux persecutions et aux tracasseries* des ennemis de la revolution. *Oubliant leurs plus grands interets* pour rendre hommage aux veus d' ordre general qui ont determine l' assemblee nationale, ils voient, *sans se plaindre*, supprimer cette foule d' etablissemens ecclesiastiques par lesquels *ils subsistoient;* et meme, en perdant leur siege episcopal, la seule de toutes ses ressources qui pouvoit, ou plutot *qui devoit, en toute equite*, leur etre conservee; condamnes *a la plus effrayante misere* sans avoir *ete ni pu etre entendus, ils ne murmurent point*, ils restent fideles aux principes du plus pur patriotisme; ils sont encore pretes a *verser leur sang* pour le maintien de la constitution, qui va reduire leur ville *a la plus deplorable nullite.*" These people are not supposed to have endured those sufferings and injustices in a struggle for liberty, for the same account states truly that they had been always free; their patience in beggary and ruin, and their suffering, without remonstrance, the most flagrant injustice, if strictly true, can be nothing but the effect of this dire fanaticism. A great multitude all over France is in the same condition and the same temper.

* See the proceedings of the confederation at *Nantz*.

* "Si plures sunt il quibus improbe datum est, quam illi quibus injuste ademptum est, idcirco plus etiam valent? Non enim numero hæc judicantur sed pondere. Quam autem habet æquitatem, ut agrum multis annis, aut etiam sæculis ante possessum, qui nullum habuit habeat; qui autem habuit amittat. Ac, propter hoc injuriæ genus, Lacedæmonii Lysandrum Ephorum expulerunt: Agin regem (quod nunquam antea apud eos acciderat) necaverunt: exque eo tempore tantæ discordiæ secutæ sunt, ut et tyranni existerint, et optimates exterminarentur, et preclarissime constituta respublica dilaberetur. Nec vero solum ipsa cecidit, sed etiam reliquam Græciam evertit contagionibus malorum, quæ a Lacedæmonis profectæ manarunt latius."—After speaking of the conduct of the model of true patriots, Aratus of Sycion, which was in a very different spirit, he says, "Sic par est agere cum civibus; non ut bis jam vidimus, hastam in foro ponere et bona civium voci subjicere præconis. At ille Græcus (id quod fuit sapientis et præstantis viri) omnibus consulendum esse putavit: eaque est summa ratio et sapientia boni civis, commoda civium non divellere, sed omnes eadem æquitate continere."—Cic. Off. 1.

open disorder. In many others there is a hollow murmuring under ground; a confused movement is felt, that threatens a general earthquake in the political world. Already confederacies and correspondencies of the most extraordinary nature are forming, in several countries.* In such a state of things we ought to hold ourselves upon our guard. In all mutations (if mutations must be) the circumstance which will serve most to blunt the edge of their mischief, and to promote what good may be in them, is, that they should find us with our minds tenacious of justice, and tender of property.

But it will be argued, that this confiscation in France ought not to alarm other nations. They say it is not made from wanton rapacity; that it is a great measure of national policy, adopted to remove an extensive, inveterate, superstitious mischief. It is with the greatest difficulty that I am able to separate policy from justice. Justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all.

When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas and all their habits to it—when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace and even of penalty—I am sure it is unjust in legislature by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatise with shame and infamy that character and those customs which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour. If to this be added an expulsion from their habitations, and a confiscation of all their goods, I am not sagacious enough to discover how this despotic sport, made of the feelings, consciences, prejudices, and properties of men, can be discriminated from the rankest tyranny.

If the injustice of the course pursued in France be clear, the policy of the measure, that is the public benefit to be expected from it, ought to be at least as evident and at least as important. To a man who acts under the influence of no passion, who has nothing in view in his projects but the public good, a great difference will immediately strike him, between what policy would dictate on the original introduction of such institutions, and on a question of their total abolition, where they have cast their roots wide and deep, and where, by long habit, things more valuable than themselves are so adapted to them, and in a manner interwoven with them, that the one cannot be destroyed without notably impairing the other. He might be embarrassed if the case were really such as sophisters represent it in their paltry style of debating. But in this, as in most questions of state, there is a middle. There is something else than the mere alternative of absolute destruction, or unreformed existence. *Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna.* This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound sense, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honest reformer. I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases. A man full of warm speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman. Every thing else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.

There are moments in the fortune of states when particular men are called to make improvements by great mental exertion. In those moments, even when they seem to enjoy the confidence of their prince and country, and to be invested with full authority, they have not always apt instruments. A politician, to do great things, looks for a *power*, what our workmen call a *purchase*; and if he finds that power, in politics as in mechanics, he cannot be at a loss to apply it. In the monastic institutions, in my opinion, was found a great *power* for the mechanism of politic benevolence. There were revenues with a public direction; there were men wholly set apart and dedicated to public purposes, without any other than public ties and public principles; men without the possibility of converting the estate of the community into a private fortune men denied to self-interests, whose avarice is for some community; men to whom persona. poverty is honour, and implicit obedience stands in the place of freedom. In vain shall a man look to the possibility of making such things when he wants them. The winds blew

* See two books intitled, Einige Originalschriften des Illuminatenordens.——System und Folgen des Illuminatenordens. Munchen, 1787.

as they list. These institutions are the products of enthusiasm; they are the instruments of wisdom. Wisdom cannot create materials; they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in the use. The perennial existence of bodies corporate and their fortunes, are things particularly suited to a man who has long views; who meditates designs that require time in fashioning; and which proposes duration when they are accomplished. He is not deserving to rank high, or even to be mentioned in the order of great statesmen, who, having obtained the command and direction of such a power as existed in the wealth, the discipline, and the habits of such corporations, as those which you have rashly destroyed, cannot find any way of converting it to the great and lasting benefit of his country. On the view of this subject, a thousand uses suggest themselves to a contriving mind. To destroy any power, growing wild from the rank productive force of the human mind, is almost tantamount, in the moral world, to the destruction of the apparently active properties of bodies in the material. It would be like the attempt to destroy (if it were in our competence to destroy) the expansive force of fixed air in nitre, or the power of steam, or of electricity, or of magnetism. These energies always existed in nature, and they were always discernible. They seemed, some of them unserviceable, some noxious, some no better than a sport to children; until contemplative ability, combining with practic skill, tamed their wild nature, subdued them to use, and rendered them at once the most powerful and the most tractable agents, in subservience to the great views and designs of men. Did fifty thousand persons, whose mental and whose bodily labour you might direct, and so many hundred thousand a year of a revenue, which was neither lazy nor superstitious, appear too big for your abilities to wield? Had you no way of using the men but by converting monks into pensioners? Had you no way of turning the revenue to account, but through the improvident resource of a spendthrift sale? If you were thus destitute of mental funds, the proceeding is in its natural course. Your politicians do not understand their trade; and therefore they sell their tools.

But the institutions savour of superstition in their very principle; and they nourish it by a permanent and standing influence. This I do not mean to dispute; but this ought not to hinder you from deriving from superstition itself any resources which may thence be furnished for the public advantage. You derive benefits from many dispositions and many passions of the human mind, which are of as doubtful a colour in the moral eye, as superstition itself. It was your business to correct and mitigate every thing which was noxious in this passion, as in all the passions. But is superstition the greatest of all possible vices? In its possible excess I think it becomes a very great evil. It is, however, a moral subject; and of course admits of all degrees and all modifications. Superstition is the religion of feeble minds; and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest. The body of all true religion consists, to be sure, in obedience to the will of the sovereign of the world; in a confidence in his declarations; and in imitation of his perfections. The rest is our own. It may be prejudicial to the great end; it may be auxiliary. Wise men, who as such, are not *admirers* (not admirers at least of the *Mirabilia Terræ*) are not violently attached to these things, nor do they violently hate them. Wisdom is not the most severe corrector of folly. They are the rival follies, which mutually wage so unrelenting a war; and which make so cruel an use of their advantages, as they can happen to engage the immoderate vulgar on the one side or the other in their quarrels. Prudence would be neuter; but if, in the contention between fond attachment and fierce antipathy concerning things in their nature not made to produce such heats, a prudent man were obliged to make a choice of what errours and excesses of enthusiasm he would condemn or bear, perhaps he would think the superstition which builds, to be more tolerable than that which demolishes—that which adorns a country, than that which deforms it—that which endows, than that which plunders—that which disposes to mistaken beneficence, than that which stimulates to real injustice—that which leads a man to refuse to himself lawful pleasures, than that which snatches from others the scanty subsistence of their self-denial. Such, I think, is very nearly the state of the question between the ancient founders of monkish superstition, and the superstition of the pretended philosophers of the hour.

For the present I postpone all consideration of the supposed public profit of the sale, which however I conceive to be perfectly delusive. I shall here only consider it as a transfer of property. On the policy of that transfer I shall trouble you with a few thoughts.

In every prosperous community something

more is produced than goes to the immediate support of the producer. This surplus forms the income of the landed capitalist. It will be spent by a proprietor who does not labour. But this idleness is itself the spring of labour; this repose the spur to industry. The only concern for the state is, that the capital taken in rent from the land, should be returned again to the industry from whence it came; and that its expenditure should be with the least possible detriment to the morals of those who expend it, and to those of the people to whom it is returned.

In all the views of receipt, expenditure, and personal employment, a sober legislator would carefully compare the possessor whom he was recommended to expel, with the stranger who was proposed to fill his place. Before the inconveniences are incurred which *must* attend all violent revolutions in property through extensive confiscation, we ought to have some rational assurance that the purchasers of the confiscated property will be in a considerable degree more laborious, more virtuous, more sober, less disposed to extort an unreasonable proportion of the gains of the labourer, or to consume on themselves a larger share than is fit for the measure of an individual, or that they should be qualified to dispense the surplus in a more steady and equal mode, so as to answer the purposes of a politic expenditure, than the old possessors, call those possessors, bishops, or canons, or commendatory abbots, or monks, or what you please. The monks are lazy. Be it so. Suppose them no otherwise employed than by singing in the choir. They are as usefully employed as those who neither sing nor say. As usefully even as those who sing upon the stage. They are as usefully employed as if they worked from dawn to dark in the innumerable servile, degrading, unseemly, unmanly, and often most unwholesome and pestiferous occupations, to which by the social œconomy so many wretches are inevitably doomed. If it were not generally pernicious to disturb the natural course of things, and to impede, in any degree, the great wheel of circulation which is turned by the strangely-directed labour of these unhappy people, I should be infinitely more inclined forcibly to rescue them from their miserable industry, than violently to disturb the tranquil repose of monastic quietude. Humanity, and perhaps policy, might better justify me in the one than in the other. It is a subject on which I have often reflected, and never reflected without feeling from it. I am sure that no consideration, except the necessity of submitting to the yoke of luxury, and the despotism of fancy, who in their own imperious way will distribute the surplus product of the soil, can justify the toleration of such trades and employments in a well-regulated state. But for this purpose of distribution, it seems to me, that the idle expenses of monks are quite as well directed as the idle expenses of us lay loiterers.

When the advantages of the possession, and of the project are on a par, there is no motive for a change. But in the present case, perhaps they are not upon a par, and the difference is in favour of the possession. It does not appear to me, that the expenses of those whom you are going to expel, do, in fact, take a course so directly and so generally leading to vitiate and degrade and render miserable those through whom they pass, as the expenses of those favourites whom you are intruding into their houses. Why should the expenditure of a great landed property, which is a dispersion of the surplus product of the soil, appear intolerable to you or to me, when it takes its course through the accumulation of vast libraries, which are the history of the force and weakness of the human mind; through great collections of ancient records, medals, and coins, which attest and explain laws and customs; through paintings and statues, that, by imitating nature, seem to extend the limits of creation; through grand monuments of the dead, which continue the regards and connections of life beyond the grave; through collections of the specimens of nature, which become a representative assembly of all the classes and families of the world, that by disposition facilitate, and, by exciting curiosity, open the avenues to science? If, by great permanent establishments, all these objects of expense are better secured from the inconstant sport of personal caprice and personal extravagance, are they worse than if the same tastes prevailed in scattered individuals? Does not the sweat of the mason and carpenter, who toil in order to partake the sweat of the peasant, flow as pleasantly and as salubriously, in the construction and repair of the majestic edifices of religion, as in the painted booths and sordid sties of vice and luxury; as honourably and as profitably in repairing those sacred works, which grow hoary with innumerable years, as on the momentary receptacles of transient voluptuousness; in opera-houses, and brothels, and gaming-houses, and club-houses, and obelisks in the Champ de Mars? Is the surplus product of the olive and the vine worse employed in the frugal sustenance of persons, whom the fictions of a pious imagination raise

to dignity by construing in the service of God, than in pampering the innumerable multitude of those who are degraded by being made useless domestics, subservient to the pride of man? Are the decorations of temples an expenditure less worthy a wise man than ribands, and laces, and national cockades, and petit maisons, and petit soupers, and all the innumerable fopperies and follies in which opulence sports away the burthen of its superfluity?

We tolerate even these; not from love of them, but for fear of worse. We tolerate them, because property and liberty, to a degree, require that toleration. But why proscribe the other, and surely, in every point of view, the more laudable use of estates? Why, through the violation of all property, through an outrage upon every principle of liberty, forcibly carry them from the better to the worse?

This comparison between the new individuals and the old corps, is made upon a supposition that no reform could be made in the latter. But in a question of reformation, I always consider corporate bodies, whether sole or consisting of many, to be much more susceptible of a public direction by the power of the state, in the use of their property, and in the regulation of modes and habits of life in their members than private citizens ever can be, or perhaps ought to be; and this seems to me a very material consideration for those who undertake any thing which merits the name of a politic enterprise.—So far as to the estates of monasteries.

With regard to the estates possessed by bishops and canons, and commendary abbots, I cannot find out for what reason some landed estates may not be held otherwise than by inheritance. Can any philosophic spoiler undertake to demonstrate the positive or the comparative evil, of having a certain, and that too a large portion of landed property, passing in succession through persons whose title to it is, always in theory, and often in fact, an eminent degree of piety, morals, and learning; a property, which, by its destination, in their turn, and on the score of merit, gives to the noblest families renovation and support, to the lowest the means of dignity and elevation; a property, the tenure to which is the performance of some duty, (whatever value you may choose to set upon that duty) and the character of whose proprietors demands at least an exteriour decorum and gravity of manners; who are to exercise a generous but temperate hospitality; part of whose income they are to consider as a trust for charity; and who, even when they fail in their trust, when they slide from their character, and degenerate into a mere common secular nobleman or gentleman, are in no respect worse than those who may succeed them in their forfeited possessions? Is it better that estates should be held by those who have no duty than by those who have one?—by those whose character and destination point to virtues, than by those who have no rule and direction in the expenditure of their estates but their own will and appetite? Nor are these estates held altogether in the character or with the evils supposed inherent in mortmain. They pass from hand to hand with a more rapid circulation than any other. No excess is good; and therefore too great a proportion of landed property may be held officially for life; but it does not seem to me of material injury to any commonwealth, that there should exist some estates that have a chance of being acquired by other means than the previous acquisition of money.

This letter is grown to a great length, though it is indeed short with regard to the infinite extent of the subject. Various avocations have from time to time called my mind from the subject. I was not sorry to give myself leisure to observe whether, in the proceedings of the national assembly, I might not find reasons to change or to qualify some of my first sentiments. Every thing has confirmed me more strongly in my first opinions. It was my original purpose to take a view of the principles of the national assembly with regard to the great and fundamental establishments; and to compare the whole of what you have substituted in the place of what you have destroyed, with the several members of our British constitution. But this plan is of greater extent than at first I computed, and I find that you have little desire to take the advantage of any examples. At present I must content myself with some remarks upon your establishments; reserving for another time what I proposed to say concerning the spirit of our British monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, as practically they exist.

I have taken a view of what has been done by the governing power in France. I have certainly spoke of it with freedom. Those whose principle it is to despise the ancient permanent sense of mankind, and to set up a scheme of society on new principles, must naturally expect that such of us who think better of the judgment of the human race than of theirs, should consider both them and their devices, as men and schemes upon their trial.

They must take it for granted that we attend much to their reason, but not at all to their authority. They have not one of the great influencing prejudices of mankind in their favour. They avow their hostility to opinion. Of course they must expect no support from that influence, which, with every other authority, they have deposed from the seat of its jurisdiction.

I can never consider this assembly as any thing else than a voluntary association of men, who have availed themselves of circumstances, to seize upon the power of the state. They have not the sanction and authority of the character under which they first met. They have assumed another of a very different nature; and have completely altered and inverted all the relations in which they originally stood. They do not hold the authority they exercise under any constitutional law of the state. They have departed from the instructions of the people by whom they were sent; which instructions, as the assembly did not act in virtue of any ancient usage or settled law, were the sole source of their authority. The most considerable of their acts have not been done by great majorities; and in this sort of near divisions, which carry only the constructive authority of the whole, strangers will consider reasons as well as resolutions.

If they had set up this new experimental government, as a necessary substitute for an expelled tyranny, mankind would anticipate the time of prescriptioh, which, through long usage, mellows into legality governments that were violent in their commencement. All those who have affections which lead them to the conservation of civil order would recognise, even in its cradle, the child as legitimate, which has been produced from those principles of cogent expediency to which all just governments owe their birth, and on which they justify their continuance. But they will be late and reluctant in giving any sort of countenance to the operations of a power, which has derived its birth from no law and no necessity; but which on the contrary has had its origin in those vices and sinister practices by which the social union is often disturbed and sometimes destroyed. This assembly has hardly a year's prescription. We have their own word for it that they have made a revolution. To make a revolution is a measure which, *prima fronte*, requires an apology. To make a revolution is to subvert the ancient state of our country; and no common reasons are called for to justify so violent a proceeding. The sense of mankind authorizes us to examine into the mode of acquiring new power, and to criticise on the use that is made of it with less awe and reverence than that which is usually conceded to a settled and recognised authority.

In obtaining and securing their power, the assembly proceeds upon principles the most opposite from those which appear to direct them in the use of it. An observation on this difference will let us into the true spirit of their conduct. Every thing which they have done, or continue to do, in order to obtain and keep their power, is by the most common arts. They proceed exactly as their ancestors of ambition have done before them.—Trace them through all their artifices, frauds, and violences, you can find nothing at all that is new. They follow precedents and examples with the punctilious exactness of a pleader. They never depart an iota from the authentic formulas of tyranny and usurpation. But in all the regulations relative to the public good, the spirit has been the very reverse of this. There they commit the whole to the mercy of untried speculations; they abandon the dearest interests of the public to those loose theories, to which none of them would choose to trust the slightest of his private concerns. They make this difference, because in their desire of obtaining and securing power they are thoroughly in earnest; there they travel in the beaten road. The public interests, because about them they have no real solicitude, they abandon wholly to chance; I say to chance, because their schemes have nothing in experience to prove their tendency beneficial.

We must always see with a pity not unmixed with respect, the errours of those who are timid and doubtful of themselves with regard to points wherein the happiness of mankind is concerned. But in these gentlemen there is nothing of the tender parental solicitude which fears to cut up the infant for the sake of an experiment. In the vastness of their promises, and the confidence of their predictions they far outdo all the boasting of empirics. The arrogance of their pretensions, in a manner provokes, and challenges us to an inquiry into their foundation.

I am convinced that there are men of considerable parts among the popular leaders in the national assembly. Some of them display eloquence in their speeches and their writings. This cannot be without powerful and cultivated talents. But eloquence may exist without a proportionable degree of wisdom. When I speak of ability, I am obliged to distinguish. What they have done towards the

support of their system bespeaks no ordinary men. In the system itself, taken as the scheme of a republic construed for procuring the prosperity and security of the citizen, and for promoting the strength and grandeur of the state, I confess myself unable to find out any thing which displays, in a single instance, the work of a comprehensive and disposing mind, or even the provisions of a vulgar prudence. Their purpose every where seems to have been to evade and slip aside from *difficulty*. This it has been the glory of the great masters in all the arts to confront, and to overcome; and when they had overcome the first difficulty, to turn it into an instrument for new conquests over new difficulties; thus to enable them to extend the empire of their science; and even to push forward beyond the reach of their original thoughts, the land-marks of the human understanding itself. Difficulty is a severe instructor, set over us by the supreme ordinance of a parental guardian and legislator who knows us better than we know ourselves, as he loves us better too. *Pater ipse colendi haud facilem esse viam voluit.* He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. It is the want of nerves of understanding for such a task; it is the degenerate fondness for tricking short-cuts, and little fallacious facilities, that has in so many parts of the world created governments with arbitrary powers. They have created the late arbitrary monarchy of France. They have created the arbitrary republic of Paris. With them defects in wisdom are to be supplied by the plenitude of force. They get nothing by it. Commencing their labours on a principle of sloth, they have the common fortune of slothful men. The difficulties which they rather had eluded than escaped, meet them again in their course; they multiply and thicken on them; they are involved, through a labyrinth of confused detail, in an industry without limit, and without direction; and, in conclusion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vicious, and insecure.

It is this inability to wrestle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary assembly of France to commence their schemes of reform with abolition and total destruction.* But is it in destroying and pulling down that skill is displayed? Your mob can do this as well at least as your assemblies. The shallowest understanding, the rudest hand is more than equal to that task. Rage and phrenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in an hundred years. The errours and defects of old establishments are visible and palpable. It calls for little ability to point them out; and where absolute power is given, it requires but a word wholly to abolish the vice and the establishment together. The same lazy but restless disposition which loves sloth and hates quiet, directs these politicians, when they come to work, for supplying the place of what they have destroyed. To make every thing the reverse of what they have seen is quite as easy as to destroy. No difficulties occur in what has never been tried. Criticism is almost baffled in discovering the defects of what has not existed; and eager enthusiasm, and cheating hope have all the wide field of imagination in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition.

At once to preserve and to reform is quite another thing. When the useful parts of an old establishment are kept, and what is superadded is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, steady persevering attention, various powers of comparison and combination, and the resources of an understanding fruitful in expedients, are to be exercised; they are to be exercised in a continued conflict with the combined force of opposite vices; with the obstinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and disgusted with every thing of which it is in possession. But you may object—"A process of this kind is slow. It is not fit for an assembly, which glories in performing in a few months the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, possibly might take up many years." Without question it might; and it ought. It is one of the

* A leading member of the assembly, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, has expressed the principle of all their proceedings as clearly as possible.—Nothing can be more simple:—"*Tous les etablissemens en France couronnent le malheur du peuple: pour le rendres heureux il faut le renouveler; changer ses idees; changer ses loix; changer ses mœurs; . . . . . changer les hommes; changer les choses; changer les mots . . . . . tout detruire; oui, tout detruire; puisque tout est a recreer.*" This gentleman was chosen president in an assembly not sitting at *Quinze-vingt*, or the *Petits Maisons*; and composed of persons giving themselves out to be rational beings; but neither his ideas, language, or conduct, differ in the smallest degree from the discourses, opinions, and actions of those within and without the assembly, who direct the operations of the machine now a work in France.

excellencies of a method in which time is among the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible. If circumspection and caution are a part of wisdom, when we work only upon inanimate matter, surely they become a part of duty too, when the subject of our demolition and construction is not brick and timber, but sentient beings, by the sudden alteration of whose state, condition, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miserable. But it seems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart, and an undoubting confidence, are the sole qualifications for a perfect legislator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance; but his movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will achieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is so much out of fashion in Paris, I mean to experience, I should tell you, that in my course I have known, and, according to my measure, have co-operated with great men; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferiour in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business. By a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first, gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts of the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage is as little as possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superiour, an excellence in composition. Where the great interests of mankind are concerned through a long succession of generations, that succession ought to be admitted into some share in the councils which are so deeply to affect them. If justice requires this, the work itself requires the aid of more minds than one age can furnish. It is from this view of things that the best legislators have been often satisfied with the establishment of some sure, solid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which some of the philosophers have called a plastic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a presiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wisdom. What your politicians think the marks of a bold, hardy genius, are only proofs of a deplorable want of ability. By their violent haste, and their defiance of the process of nature, they are delivered over blindly to every projector and adventurer, to every alchymist and empyric. They despair of turning to account any thing that is common. Diet is nothing in their system of remedy. The worst of it is, that this their despair of curing common distempers by regular methods, arises not only from defect of comprehension, but, I fear, from some malignity of disposition. Your legislators seem to have taken their opinions of all professions, ranks, and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of satirists; who would themselves be astonished if they were held to the letter of their own descriptions. By listening only to these, your leaders regard all things only on the side of their vices and faults, and view those vices and faults under every colour of exaggeration. It is undoubtedly true, though it may seem paradoxical; but in general, those who are habitually employed in finding and displaying faults, are unqualified for the work of reformation: because their minds are not only unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the contemplation of those things. By hating vices too much, they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful, that they should be indisposed and unable to serve them. From hence arises the complexional disposition of some of your guides to pull every thing in pieces. At this malicious game they display the whole of their *quadrimanous* activity. As to the rest, the paradoxes of eloquent writers, brought forth purely as a sport of fancy, to try their talents, to rouse attention, and excite surprise, are taken up by these gentlemen, not in the spirit of the original authors, as means of cultivating their taste and improving their style. These paradoxes become with them serious grounds of action, upon which they proceed in regulating the most important concerns of the state. Cicero ludicrously describes

Cato as endeavouring to act in the commonwealth upon the school paradoxes which exercised the wits of the junior students in the stoic philosophy. If this was true of Cato, these gentlemen copy after him in the manner of some persons who lived about his time—*pedes nudo Catonem*. Mr. Hume told me, that he had from Rousseau himself the secret of his principles of composition. That acute, though eccentric observer, had perceived, that to strike and interest the public, the marvellous must be produced; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long since lost its effect; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which succeeded, had exhausted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age; that now nothing was left to a writer but that species of the marvellous, which might still be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlooked-for strokes in politics and morals. I believe, that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical phrenzy of his scholars, who in their paradoxes are servile imitators; and even in their incredulity discover an implicit faith.

Men who undertake considerable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to presume ability. But the physician of the state, who, not satisfied with the cure of distempers, undertakes to regenerate constitutions, ought to shew uncommon powers. Some very unusual appearances of wisdom ought to display themselves on the face of the designs of those who appeal to no practice, and who copy after no model. Has any such been manifested? I shall take a view (it shall for the subject be a very short one) of what the assembly has done, with regard, first, to the constitution of the legislature; in the next place, to that of the executive power; then to that of the judicature; afterwards to the model of the army; and conclude with the system of finance, to see whether we can discover in any part of their schemes the portentous ability, which may justify these bold undertakers in the superiority which they assume over mankind.

It is in the model of the sovereign and presiding part of this new republic, that we should expect their grand display. Here they were to prove their title to their proud demands. For the plan itself at large, and for the reasons on which it is grounded, I refer to the journals of the assembly of the 29th of September, 1789, and to the subsequent proceedings which have made any alterations in the plan. So far as in a matter somewhat confused I can see light, the system remains substantially as it has been originally framed. My few remarks will be such as regard its spirit, its tendency, and its fitness for framing a popular commonwealth, which they profess theirs to be, suited to the ends for which any commonwealth, and particularly such a commonwealth, is made. At the same time I mean to consider its consistency with itself and its own principles.

Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived. In old establishments various correctives have been found for their aberrations from theory. Indeed they are the results of various necessities and expediencies. They are not often constructed after any theory; theories are rather drawn from them. In them we often see the end best obtained, where the means seem not perfectly reconcilable to what we may fancy was the original scheme. The means taught by experience may be better suited to political ends than those contrived in the original project. They again re-act upon the primitive constitution, and sometimes improve the design itself from which they seem to have departed. I think all this might be curiously exemplified in the British constitution. At worst, the errours and deviations of every kind in reckoning are found and computed, and the ship proceeds in her course. This is the case of old establishments; but in a new and merely theoretic system, it is expected that every contrivance shall appear, on the face of it, to answer its ends; especially where the projectors are no way embarrassed with an endeavour to accommodate the new building to an old one, either in the walls or on the foundations.

The French builders, clearing away as mere rubbish whatever they found, and, like their ornamental gardeners, forming every thing into an exact level, propose to rest the whole local and general legislature on three bases of three different kinds; one geometrical, one arithmetical, and the third financial; the first of which they call the *basis of territory*; the second, the *basis of population*; and the third, the *basis of contribution*. For the accomplishment of the first of these purposes, they divide the area of their country into eighty-three pieces, regularly square, of eighteen leagues by eighteen. These large divisions are called *Departments*. These they portion, proceeding by square measurement, into seventeen hun-

dred and twenty districts, called *Communes*. These again they subdivide, still proceeding by square measurement, into smaller districts called *Cantons*, making in all 6,400.

At first view this geometrical basis of theirs presents not much to admire or to blame. It calls for no great legislative talents. Nothing more than an accurate land surveyor, with his chain, sight, and theodolite, is requisite for such a plan as this. In the old divisions of the country, various accidents at various times, and the ebb and flow of various properties and jurisdictions, settled their bounds. These bounds were not made upon any fixed system undoubtedly. They were subject to some inconveniences; but they were inconveniences for which use had found remedies, and habit had supplied accommodation and patience. In this new pavement of square within square, and this organization and semi-organization made on the system of Empedocles and Buffon, and not upon any politic principle, it is impossible that innumerable local inconveniences, to which men are not habituated, must not arise. But these I pass over, because it requires an accurate knowledge of the country, which I do not possess, to specify them.

When these state surveyors came to take a view of their work of measurement, they soon found, that in politics the most fallacious of all things was geometrical demonstration. They had then recourse to another basis (or rather buttress) to support the building, which tottered on that false foundation. It was evident, that the goodness of the soil, the number of the people, their wealth, and the largeness of their contribution, made such infinite variations between square and square as to render mensuration a ridiculous standard of power in the commonwealth, and equality in geometry the most unequal of all measures in the distribution of men. However, they could not give it up. But dividing their political and civil representation into three parts, they allotted one of those parts to the square measurement, without a single fact or calculation to ascertain whether this territorial proportion of representation was fairly assigned, and ought upon any principle really to be a third. Having however given to geometry this portion (of a third for her dower) out of compliment I suppose to that sublime science, they left the other two to be scuffled for between the other parts, population and contribution.

When they came to provide for population, they were not able to proceed quite so smoothly as they had done in the field of their geometry. Here their arithmetic came to bear upon their juridical metaphysics. Had they stuck to their metaphysic principles, the arithmetical process would be simple indeed. Men, with them, are strictly equal, and are entitled to equal rights in their own government. Each head, on this system, would have its vote, and every man would vote directly for the person who was to represent him in the legislature. "But soft—by regular degrees, not yet." This metaphysic principle, to which law, custom, usage, policy, reason, were to yield, is to yield itself to their pleasure. There must be many degrees, and some stages, before the representative can come in contact with his constituent. Indeed, as we shall soon see, these two persons are to have no sort of communion with each other. First, the voters in the *Canton*, who compose what they call *primary assemblies*, are to have a *qualification*. What! a qualification on the indefeasible rights of men? Yes; but it shall be a very small qualification. Our injustice shall be very little oppressive; only the local valuation of three days labour paid to the public. Why, this is not much, I readily admit, for any thing but the utter subversion of your equalizing principle. As a qualification it might as well be let alone; for it answers no one purpose for which qualifications are established: and, on your ideas, it excludes from a vote, the man of all others whose natural equality stands the most in need of protection and defence; I mean the man who has nothing else but his natural equality to guard him. You order him to buy the right, which you before told him nature had given to him gratuitously at his birth, and of which no authority on earth could lawfully deprive him. With regard to the person who cannot come up to your market, a tyrannous aristocracy, as against him, is established at the very outset, by you who pretend to be its sworn foe.

The gradation proceeds. These primary assemblies of the *Canton* elect deputies to the *Commune*; one for every two hundred qualified inhabitants. Here is the first medium put between the primary elector and the representative legislator; and here a new turnpike is fixed for taxing the rights of men with a second qualification: for none can be elected into the *Commune* who does not pay the amount of ten days labour. Nor have we yet done. There is still to be another gradation.* These *Communes*, chosen by the *Canton*, choose to the *Department*; and the

* The assembly, in executing the plan of their committee, made some alterations. They have

deputies of the *Department* choose their deputies to the *National Assembly*. Here is a third barrier of a senseless qualification. Every deputy to the National Assembly must pay, in direct contribution, to the value of a *mark of silver*. Of all these qualifying barriers we must think alike; that they are impotent to secure independence; strong only to destroy the rights of men.

In all this process, which in its fundamental elements affects to consider only *population* upon a principle of natural right, there is a manifest attention to *property*; which, however just and reasonable on other schemes, is on theirs perfectly unsupportable.

When they come to their third basis, that of *Contribution*, we find that they have more completely lost sight of the rights of men. This last basis rests *entirely* on property. A principle totally different from the equality of men, and utterly irreconcilable to it, is thereby admitted; but no sooner is this principle admitted, than (as usual) it is subverted; and it is not subverted (as we shall presently see) to approximate the inequality of riches to the level of nature. The additional share in the third portion of representation (a portion reserved exclusively for the higher contribution) is made to regard the *district* only, and not the individuals in it who pay. It is easy to perceive, by the course of their reasonings, how much they were embarrassed by their contradictory ideas of the rights of men and the privileges of riches. The committee of constitution do as good as admit that they are wholly irreconcilable. "The relation with regard to the contributions, is without doubt *null* (say they) when the question is on the balance of the political rights as between individual and individual; without which *personal equality would be destroyed*, and *an aristocracy of the rich* would be established. But this inconvenience entirely disappears when the proportional relation of the contribution is only considered in the *great masses*, and is solely between province and province; it serves in that case only to form a just reciprocal proportion between the cities, without affecting the personal rights of the citizens."

Here the principle of *contribution*, as takes between man and man, is reprobated as *null*, and destructive to equality; and as pernicious too; because it leads to the establishment of an *aristocracy of the rich*. However, it must not be abandoned. And the way of getting rid of the difficulty is to establish the inequality as between department and department, leaving all the individuals in each department upon an exact par. Observe, that this parity between individuals had been before destroyed when the qualifications within the departments were settled; nor does it seem a matter of great importance whether the equality of men be injured by masses or individually. An individual is not of the same importance in a mass represented by a few, as in a mass represented by many. It would be too much to tell a man jealous of his equality, that the elector has the same franchise who votes for three members as he who votes for ten.

Now take it in the other point of view, and let us suppose their principle of representation according to contribution, that is according to riches, to be well imagined, and to be a necessary basis for their republic. In this their third basis they assume, that riches ought to be respected, and that justice and policy require that they should entitle men, in some mode or other, to a larger share in the administration of public affairs; it is now to be seen how the assembly provides for the pre-eminence, or even for the security of the rich, by conferring, in virtue of their opulence, that larger measure of power to their district which is denied to them personally. I readily admit (indeed I should lay it down as a fundamental principle) that in a republican government, which has a democratic basis, the rich do require an additional security above what is necessary to them in monarchies. They are subject to envy, and through envy to oppression. On the present scheme it is impossible to divine what advantage they derive from the aristocratic preference upon which the unequal representation of the masses is founded. The rich cannot feel it, either as a support to dignity, or as security to fortune: for the aristocratic mass is generated from purely democratic principles; and the preference given to it in the general representation has no sort of reference to, or connection with, the persons, upon account of whose property this superiority of the mass is established. If the contrivers of this scheme meant any sort of favour to the rich, in consequence of their contribution, they ought to have conferred the privilege either on the individual rich, or on some class formed

struck out one stage in these gradations; this removes a part of the objection: but the main objection, namely, that in their scheme the first constituent voter has no connection with the representative legislator, remains in all its force. There are other alterations, some possibly for the better, some certainly for the worse: but to the author the merit or demerit of these smaller alterations appears to be of no moment, where the scheme itself is fundamentally vicious and absurd.

of rich persons, (as historians represent Servius Tullius to have done in the early constitution of Rome;) because the contest between the rich and the poor is not a struggle between corporation and corporation, but a contest between men and men; a competition not between districts, but between descriptions. It would answer its purpose better if the scheme were inverted; that the votes of the masses were rendered equal; and that the votes within each mass were proportioned to property.

Let us suppose one man in a district (it is an easy supposition) to contribute as much as an hundred of his neighbours. Against these he has but one vote. If there were but one representative for the mass, his poor neighbours would outvote him by an hundred to one for that single representative. Bad enough. But amends are to be made him. How? The district, in virtue of his wealth, is to choose, say ten members instead of one: that is to say, by paying a very large contribution he has the happiness of being outvoted, an hundred to one, by the poor, for ten representatives, instead of being outvoted exactly in the same proportion for a single member. In truth, instead of benefiting by this superiour quantity of representation, the rich man is subjected to an additional hardship. The increase of representation within his province sets up nine persons more, and as many more than nine as there may be democratic candidates, to cabal and intrigue, and to flatter the people at his expense and to his oppression. An interest is by this means held out to multitudes of the inferiour sort, in obtaining a salary of eighteen livres a day (to them a vast object) besides the pleasure of a residence in Paris, and their share in the government of the kingdom. The more the objects of ambition are multiplied and become democratic, just in that proportion the rich are endangered.

Thus it must fare between the poor and the rich in the province deemed aristocratic, which in its internal relation is the very reverse of that character. In its external relation, that is, in its relation to the other provinces, I cannot see how the unequal representation, which is given to masses on account of wealth, becomes the means of preserving the equipoise and the tranquillity of the commonwealth. For if it be one of the objects to secure the weak from being crushed by the strong (as in all society undoubtedly it is) how are the smaller and poorer of these masses to be saved from the tyranny of the more wealthy? Is it by adding to the wealthy further and more systematical means of oppressing them? When we come to a balance of representation between corporate bodies, provincial interests, emulations, and jealousies, are full as likely to arise among them as among individuals; and their divisions are likely to produce a much hotter spirit of dissension, and something leading much more nearly to a war.

I see that these aristocratic masses are made upon what is called the principle of direct contribution. Nothing can be a more unequal standard than this. The indirect contribution, that which arises from duties on consumption, is in truth a better standard, and follows and discovers wealth more naturally than this of direct contribution. It is difficult indeed to fix a standard of local preference on account of the one, or of the other, or of both, because some provinces may pay the more of either or of both, on account of causes not intrinsic, but originating from those very districts over whom they have obtained a preference in consequence of their ostensible contribution. If the masses were independent sovereign bodies, who were to provide for a federative treasury by distinct contingents, and that the revenue had not (as it has) many impositions running through the whole, which affect men individually, and not corporately, and which, by their nature, confound all territorial limits, something might be said for the basis of contribution as founded on masses. But of all things, this representation, to be measured by contribution, is the most difficult to settle upon principles of equity, in a country, which renders its districts as members of a whole. For a great city, such as Bourdeaux or Paris, appears to pay a vast body of duties, almost out of all assignable proportion to other places, and its mass is considered accordingly. But are these cities the true contributors in that proportion? No. The consumers of the commodities imported into Bourdeaux, who are scattered through all France, pay the import duties of Bourdeaux. The produce of the vintage in Guienne and Languedoc give to that city the means of its contribution growing out of an export commerce. The landholders who spend their estates in Paris, and are thereby the creators of that city, contribute for Paris from the provinces out of which their revenues arise. Very nearly the same arguments will apply to the representative share given on account of *direct* contribution: because the direct contribution must be assessed on wealth real or presumed; and that local wealth will itself arise from causes not local, and which therefore in equity ought not to produce a local preference.

It is very remarkable, that in this fundamental regulation, which settles the representation of the mass upon the direct contribution, they have not yet settled how that direct contribution shall be laid, and how apportioned. Perhaps there is some latent policy towards the continuance of the present assembly in this strange procedure. However, until they do this, they can have no certain constitution. It must depend at last upon the system of taxation, and must vary with every variation in that system. As they have contrived matters, their taxation does not so much depend on their constitution, as their constitution on their taxation. This must introduce great confusion among the masses; as the variable qualification for votes within the district, must, if ever real contested elections take place, cause infinite internal controversies.

To compare together the three bases, not on their political reason, but on the ideas on which the assembly works, and to try its consistency with itself, we cannot avoid observing, that the principle which the committee call the basis of *population*, does not begin to operate from the same point with the two other principles called the bases of *territory* and of *contribution*, which are both of an aristocratic nature. The consequence is, that where all three begin to operate together, there is the most absurd inequality produced by the operation of the former on the two latter principles. Every canton contains four square leagues, and is estimated to contain, on the average, 4,000 inhabitants, or 680 voters in the *primary assemblies*, which vary in numbers with the population of the canton, and send *one deputy* to the *commune* for every 200 voters. *Nine cantons* make a *commune*.

Now let us take *a canton* containing *a seaport town of trade*, or *a great manufacturing town*. Let us suppose the population of this canton to be 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters, forming *three primary assemblies*, and sending *ten deputies* to the *commune*.

Oppose to this *one* canton *two* others of the remaining eight in the same commune. These we may suppose to have their fair population of 4,000 inhabitants, and 680 voters each, or 8,000 inhabitants and 1,360 voters, both together. These will form only *two primary assemblies*, and send only *six* deputies to the *commune*.

When the assembly of the *commune* comes to vote on the *basis of territory*, which principle is first admitted to operate in that assembly, the *single canton* which has *half* the territory of the *other two*, will have *ten* voices to *six* in the election of *three deputies* to the assembly of the department, chosen on the express ground of a representation of territory. This inequality, striking as it is, will be yet highly aggravated, if we suppose, as we fairly may, the *several* other cantons of the *commune* to fall proportionably short of the average population, as much as the *principal canton* exceeds it.

Now as *the basis of contribution*, which also is a principle admitted first to operate in the assembly of the *commune*. Let us again take *one* canton, such as is stated above. If the whole of the direct contributions paid by a great trading or manufacturing town be divided equally among the inhabitants, each individual will be found to pay much more than an individual living in the country according to the same average. The whole paid by the inhabitants of the former will be more than the whole paid by the inhabitants of the latter—we may fairly assume one-third more. Then the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the canton will pay as much as 19,050 inhabitants, or 3,289 voters of the *other cantons*, which are nearly the estimated proportion of inhabitants and voters of *five* other cantons. Now the 2,193 voters will, as I before said, send only *ten* deputies to the assembly; the 3,289 voters will send *sixteen*. Thus, for an *equal* share in the contribution of the whole *commune*, there will be a difference of *sixteen* voices to *ten* in voting for deputies to be chosen on the principle of representing the general contribution of the whole *commune*.

By the same mode of computation we shall find 15,875 inhabitants, or 2,741 voters of the *other* cantons, who pay *one-sixth* LESS to the contribution of the whole *commune*, will have *three* voices MORE than the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the *one* canton.

Such is the fantastical and unjust inequality between mass and mass, in this curious repartition of the rights of representation arising out of *territory* and *contribution*. The qualifications which these confer are in truth negative qualifications, that give a right in an inverse proportion to the possession of them.

In this whole contrivance of the three bases, consider it in any light you please, I do not see a variety of objects, reconciled in one consistent whole, but several contradictory principles reluctantly and irreconcilably brought and held together by your philosophers, like wild beasts shut up in a cage, to claw and bite each other to their mutual destruction.

I am afraid I have gone too far into their way of considering the formation of a constitution. They have much, but bad, metaphy-

sics; much, but bad, geometry; much, but false, proportionate arithmetic; but if it were all as exact as metaphysics, geometry, and arithmetic ought to be, and if their schemes were perfectly consistent in all their parts, it would make only a more fair and sightly vision. It is remarkable, that in a great arrangement of mankind, not one reference whatsoever is to be found to any thing moral or any thing politic; nothing that relates to the concerns, the actions, the passions, the interests of men. *Hominem non sapiunt.*

You see I only consider this constitution as electoral, and leading by steps to the national assembly. I do not enter into the internal government of the departments, and their genealogy through the communes and cantons. These local governments are, in the original plan, to be as nearly as possible composed in the same manner and on the same principles with the elective assemblies. They are each of them bodies perfectly compact and rounded in themselves.

You cannot but perceive in this scheme, that it has a direct and immediate tendency to sever France into a variety of republics, and to render them totally independent of each other, without any direct constitutional means of coherence, connection, or subordination, except what may be derived from their acquiescence in the determinations of the general congress of the ambassadors from each independent republic. Such in reality is the national assembly, and such governments I admit to exist in the world, though in forms infinitely more suitable to the local and habitual circumstances of their people. But such associations, rather than bodies politic, have generally been the effect of necessity, not choice; and I believe the present French power is the very first body of citizens, who, having obtained full authority to do with their country what they pleased, have chosen to dissever it in this barbarous manner.

It is impossible not to observe, that in the spirit of this geometrical distribution, and arithmetical arrangement, these pretended citizens treat France exactly like a country of conquest. Acting as conquerours, they have imitated the policy of the harshest of that harsh race. The policy of such barbarous victors, who contemn a subdued people, and insult their feelings, has ever been, as much as in them lay, to destroy all vestiges of the ancient country, in religion, in polity, in laws and in manners; to confound all territorial limits; to produce a general poverty; to put up their properties to auction; to crush their princes, nobles, and pontiffs; to lay low every thing which had lifted its head above the level, or which could serve to combine or rally, in their distresses, the disbanded people, under the standard of old opinion. They have made France free in the manner in which those sincere friends to the rights of mankind, the Romans, freed Greece, Macedon, and other nations. They destroyed the bonds of their union, under colour of providing for the independence of each of their cities.

When the members who compose these new bodies of cantons, communes, and departments, arrangements purposely produced through the medium of confusion, begin to act, they will find themselves, in a great measure, strangers to one another. The electors and elected throughout, especially in the rural *cantons*, will be frequently without any civil habitudes or connections, or any of that natural discipline which is the soul of a true republic. Magistrates and collectors of revenue are now no longer acquainted with their districts; bishops with their dioceses, or curates with their parishes. These new colonies of the rights of men bear a strong resemblance to that sort of military colonies which Tacitus has observed upon in the declining policy of Rome. In better and wiser days (whatever course they took with foreign nations) they were careful to make the elements of a methodical subordination and settlement to be coeval; and even to lay the foundations of discipline in the military.* But, when all the good arts had fallen into ruin, they proceeded, as your assembly does, upon the equality of men, and with as little judgment, and as little care for those things which make a republic tolerable or durable. But in this, as well as almost every instance, your new commonwealth is born, and bred, and fed, in those corruptions which mark degenerated and worn-out republics. Your child comes into the world with the symptoms of death; the *facies Hippocratica* forms the character of its physiognomy, and the prognostic of its fate.

The legislators who framed the ancient republics knew that their business was too ardu-

* Non, ut olim, universæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis, et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, ut consensu et caritate rempublicam afficerent; sed ignoti inter se, diversis manipulis, sine rectore, sine affectibus mutuis, quasi ex alio genere mortalium, repente in unum collecti, numerus magis quam colonia. Tac. Annal. l. 14. sect. 27. All this will be still more applicable to the unconnected, rotatory, biennial national assemblies, in this absurd and senseless constitution.

ous to be accomplished with no better apparatus than the metaphysics of an under graduate, and the mathematics and arithmetic of an exciseman. They had to do with men, and they were obliged to study human nature. They had to do with citizens, and they were obliged to study the effects of those habits which are communicated by the circumstances of civil life. They were sensible that the operation of this second nature on the first produced a new combination; and thence arose many diversities among men, according to their birth, their education, their professions, the periods of their lives, their residence in towns or in the country, their several ways of acquiring and of fixing property, and according to the quality of the property itself, all which rendered them as it were so many different species of animals. From hence they thought themselves obliged to dispose their citizens into such classes, and to place them in such situations in the state as their peculiar habits might qualify them to fill, and to allot to them such appropriate privileges as might secure to them what their specific occasions required, and which might furnish to each description such force as might protect it in the conflict caused by the diversity of interests, that must exist, and must contend, in all complex society: for the legislator would have been ashamed, that the coarse husbandman should well know how to assort and to use his sheep, horses, and oxen, and should have enough of common sense not to abstract and equalize them all into animals, without providing for each kind an appropriate food, care, and employment; whilst he, the œconomist, disposer and shepherd of his own kindred, subliming himself into an airy metaphysician, was resolved to know nothing of his flocks but as men in general. It is for this reason that Montesquieu observed very justly, that in their classification of the citizens, the great legislators of antiquity made the greatest display of their powers, and even soared above themselves. It is here that your modern legislators have gone deep into the negative series, and sunk even below their own nothing. As the first sort of legislators attended to the different kinds of citizens, and combined them into one commonwealth, the others, the metaphysical and alchemistical legislators, have taken the direct contrary course. They have attempted to confound all sorts of citizens, as well as they could, into one homogeneous mass; and then they divided this their amalgama into a number of incoherent republics. They reduce men to loose counters, merely for the sake of simple telling, and not to figures whose power is to arise from their place in the table. The elements of their own metaphysics might have taught them better lessons. The troll of their categorical table might have informed them that there was something else in the intellectual world besides *substance* and *quantity*. They might learn from the catechism of metaphysics that there were eight heads more,* in every complex deliberation, which they have never thought of, though these, of all the ten, are the subject on which the skill of man can operate any thing at all.

So far from this able disposition of some of the old republican legislators, which follows with a solicitous accuracy the moral conditions and propensities of men, they have levelled and crushed together all the orders which they found, even under the coarse unartificial arrangement of the monarchy, in which mode of government the classing of the citizens is not of so much importance as in a republic. It is true, however, that every such classification, if properly ordered, is good in all forms of government; and composes a strong barrier against the excesses of despotism, as well as it is the necessary means of giving effect and permanence to a republic. For want of something of this kind, if the present project of a republic should fail, all securities to a moderated freedom fail along with it; all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendency in France, under this or under any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered at setting out, by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth. This is to play a most desperate game.

The confusion, which attends on all such proceedings, they even declare to be one of their objects, and they hope to secure their constitution by a terrour of a return of those evils which attended their making it. "By this," say they, "its destruction will become difficult to authority, which cannot break it up without the entire disorganization of the whole state." They presume, that if this authority should ever come to the same degree of power that they have acquired, it would make a more moderate and chastised use of it, and would piously tremble entirely to disorganize the state in the savage manner that they have done. They expect, from the virtues of returning

* Qualitas, Relatio, Actio, Passio, Ubi, Quando, Situs, Habitus.

despotism, the security which is to be enjoyed by the offspring of their popular vices.

I wish, Sir, that you and my readers would give an attentive perusal to the work of M. de Calonne, on this subject. It is indeed not only an eloquent but an able and instructive performance. I confine myself to what he says relative to the constitution of the new state, and to the condition of the revenue. As to the disputes of this minister with his rivals, I do not wish to pronounce upon them. As little do I mean to hazard any opinion concerning his ways and means, financial or political, for taking his country out of its present disgraceful and deplorable situation of servitude, anarchy, bankruptcy, and beggary. I cannot speculate quite so sanguinely as he does: but he is a Frenchman, and has a closer duty relative to those objects, and better means of judging of them, than I can have. I wish that the formal avowal which he refers to, made by one of the principal leaders in the assembly, concerning the tendency of their scheme to bring France not only from a monarchy to a republic, but from a republic to a mere confederacy, may be very particularly attended to. It adds new force to my observations; and indeed M. de Calonne's work supplies my deficiencies by many new and striking arguments on most of the subjects of this letter.*

It is this resolution, to break their country into separate republics, which has driven them into the greatest number of their difficulties and contradictions. If it were not for this, all the questions of exact equality, and these balances, never to be settled, of individual rights, population, and contribution, would be wholly useless. The representation, though derived from parts, would be a duty which equally regarded the whole. Each deputy to the assembly would be the representative of France, and of all its descriptions, of the many and of the few, of the rich and of the poor, of the great districts and of the small. All these districts would themselves be subordinate to some standing authority, existing independently of them; an authority in which their representation, and every thing that belongs to it, originated, and to which it was pointed. This standing, unalterable, fundamental government would make, and it is the only thing which could make, that territory truly and properly a whole. With us, when we elect popular representatives, we send them to a council, in which each man individually is a subject, and submitted to a government complete in all its ordinary functions. With you the elective assembly is the sovereign, and the sole sovereign; all the members are therefore integral parts of this sole sovereignty. But with us it is totally different. With us the representative, separated from the other parts, can have no action and no existence. The government is the point of reference of the several members and districts of our representation. This is the centre of our unity. This government of reference is a trustee for the *whole*, and not for the parts. So is the other branch of our public council, I mean the house of lords. With us the king and the lords are several and joint securities for the equality of each district, each province, each city. When did you hear in Great Britain of any province suffering from the inequality of its representation; what district from having no representation at all? Not only our monarchy and our peerage secure the equality on which our unity depends, but it is the spirit of the house of commons itself. The very inequality of representation, which is so foolishly complained of, is perhaps the very thing which prevents us from thinking or acting as members for districts. Cornwall elects as many members as all Scotland. But is Cornwall better taken care of than Scotland? Few trouble their heads about any of your bases, out of some giddy clubs. Most of those who wish for any change, upon any plausible grounds, desire it on different ideas.

Your new constitution is the very reverse of ours in its principle; and I am astonished how any persons could dream of holding out any thing done in it as an example for Great Britain. With you there is little, or rather, no connection between the last representative and the first constituent. The member who goes to the national assembly is not chosen by the people, nor accountable to them. There are three elections before he is chosen: two sets of magistracy intervene between him and the primary assembly, so as to render him, as I have said, an ambassador of a state, and not the representative of the people within a state. By this the whole spirit of the election is changed; nor can any corrective your constitution-mongers have devised, render him any thing else than what he is. The very attempt to do it would inevitably introduce a confusion, if possible, more horrid than the present. There is no way to make a connection between the original constituent and the representative, but by the circuitous means which may lead the candidate to apply in the first instance to the primary electors, in order that by their autho-

* See L'Etat de la France, p. 363.

ritative instructions (and something more perhaps) these primary electors may force the two succeeding bodies of electors to make a choice agreeable to their wishes. But this would plainly subvert the whole scheme. It would be to plunge them back into that tumult and confusion of popular election, which by their interposed gradation of elections, they mean to avoid, and at length to risk the whole fortune of the state with those who have the least knowledge of it, and the least interest in it. This is a perpetual dilemma, into which they are thrown by the vicious, weak, and contradictory principles they have chosen. Unless the people break up and level this gradation, it is plain that they do not at all substantially elect to the assembly; indeed they elect as little in appearance as reality.

What is it we all seek for in an election? To answer its real purposes; you must first possess the means of knowing the fitness of your man; and then you must retain some hold upon him by personal obligation or dependence. For what end are these primary electors complimented, or rather mocked with a choice? They can never know any thing of the qualities of him that is to serve them, nor has he any obligation whatsoever to them. Of all the powers unfit to be delegated by those who have any real means of judging, that most peculiarly unfit is what relates to a *personal* choice. In case of abuse, that body of primary electors never can call the representative to an account for his conduct. He is too far removed from them in the chain of representation. If he acts improperly at the end of his two years' lease, it does not concern him for two years more. By the new French constitution the best and the wisest representatives go equally with the worst into this *Limbus Patrum*. Their bottoms are supposed foul, and they must go into dock to be refitted. Every man who has served in an assembly is ineligible for two years after. Just as these magistrates begin to learn their trade, like chimney-sweepers, they are disqualified for exercising it. Superficial, new, petulant acquisition, and interrupted, dronish, broken, ill recollection, is to be the destined character of all your future governours. Your constitution has too much of jealousy to have much of sense in it. You consider the breach of trust in the representative so principally, that you do not at all regard the question of his fitness to execute it.

This purgatory interval is not unfavourable to a faithless representative, who may be as good a canvasser as he was a bad governour. In this time he may cabal himself into a superiority over the wisest and most virtuous. As, in the end, all the members of this elective constitution are equally fugitive, and exist only for the election, they may be no longer the same persons who had chosen him, to whom he is to be responsible when he solicits for a renewal of his trust. To call all the secondary electors of the *Commune* to account, is ridiculous, impracticable, and unjust; they may themselves have been deceived in their choice, as the third set of electors, those of the *Department*, may be in theirs. In your elections responsibility cannot exist.

Finding no sort of principle of coherence with each other in the nature and constitution of the several new republics of France, I considered what cement the legislators had provided for them from any extraneous materials. Their confederations, their *spectacles*, their civic feasts, and their enthusiasm, I take no notice of; they are nothing but mere tricks; but tracing their policy through their actions, I think I can distinguish the arrangements by which they propose to hold these republics together. The first, is the *confiscation*, with the compulsory paper currency annexed to it; the second, is the supreme power of the city of Paris; the third, is the general army of the state. Of this last I shall reserve what I have to say, until I come to consider the army as an head by itself.

As to the operation of the first (the confiscation and paper currency) merely as a cement, I cannot deny that these, the one depending on the other, may for some time compose some sort of cement, if their madness and folly in the management, and in the tempering of the parts together, does not produce a repulsion in the very outset. But allowing to the scheme some coherence and some duration, it appears to me, that if, after a while, the confiscation should not be found sufficient to support the paper coinage, (as I am morally certain it will not,) then, instead of cementing, it will add infinitely to the dissociation, distraction, and confusion of these confederate republics, both with relation to each other, and to the several parts within themselves. But if the confiscation should so far succeed as to sink the paper currency, the cement is gone with the circulation. In the mean time its binding force will be very uncertain, and it will straiten or relax with every variation in the credit of the paper.

One thing only is certain in this scheme, which is an effect seemingly collateral, but direct, I have no doubt, in the minds of those who conduct this business, that is, its effect in

producing an *Oligarchy* in every one of the republics. A paper circulation, not founded on any real money deposited or engaged for, amounting already to four-and-forty millions of English money, and this currency by force substituted in the place of the coin of the kingdom, becoming thereby the substance of its revenue, as well as the medium of all its commercial and civil intercourse, must put the whole of what power, authority and influence is left, in any form whatsoever it may assume, into the hands of the managers and conductors of this circulation.

In England we feel the influence of the bank; though it is only the centre of a voluntary dealing. He knows little indeed of the influence of money upon mankind, who does not see the force of the management of a monied concern, which is so much more extensive, and in its nature so much more depending on the managers than any of ours. But this is not merely a money concern. There is another member in the system inseparably connected with this money management. It consists in the means of drawing out at discretion portions of the confiscated lands for sale; and carrying on a process of continual transmutation of paper into land, and land into paper. When we follow this process in its effects, we may conceive something of the intensity of the force with which this system must operate. By this means the spirit of money jobbing and speculation goes into the mass of land itself, and incorporates with it. By this kind of operation, that species of property becomes (as it were) volatilised; it assumes an unnatural and monstrous activity, and thereby throws into the hands of the several managers, principal and subordinate, Parisian and provincial, all the representative of money, and perhaps a full tenth part of all the land in France, which has now acquired the worst and most pernicious part of the evil of a paper circulation, the greatest possible uncertainty in its value. They have reversed the Latonian kindness to the landed property of Delos. They have sent theirs to be blown about, like the light fragments of a wreck, *oras et littora circum*.

The new dealers being all habitually adventurers, and without any fixed habits or local predilections, will purchase to job out again, as the market of paper, or of money, or of land shall present an advantage. For though a holy bishop thinks that agriculture will derive great advantages from the "*enlightened*" usurers who are to purchase the church confiscations, I, who am not a good, but an old farmer, with great humility beg leave to tell his late lordship, that usury is not tutor of agriculture; and if the word "enlightened" be understood according to the new dictionary, as it always is in your new schools, I cannot conceive how a man's not believing in God can teach him to cultivate the earth with the least of any additional skill or encouragement. "Diis immortalibus sero," said an old Roman, when he held one handle of the plough, whilst Death held the other. Though you were to join in the commission all the directors of the two academies to the directors of the *Caisse d'Escompte*, an old experienced peasant is worth them all. I have got more information upon a curious and interesting branch of husbandry, in one short conversation with an old Carthusian monk, than I have derived from all the Bank directors that I have ever conversed with. However, there is no cause for apprehension from the meddling of money-dealers with rural œconomy. These gentlemen are too wise in their generation. At first, perhaps, their tender and susceptible imaginations may be captivated with the innocent and unprofitable delights of a pastoral life; but in a little time they will find that agriculture is a trade much more laborious, and much less lucrative than that which they had left. After making its panegyric, they will turn their backs on it like their great precursor and prototype. They may, like him, begin by singing "*Beatus ille*"—but what will be the end?

> Hæc ubi locutus fœnerator Alphius,
> Jam jam futurus rusticus
> Omnem relegit Idibus pecuniam;
> Quærit calendis ponere.

They will cultivate the *Caisse d' Eglise*, under the sacred auspices of this prelate, with much more profit than its vine-yards and its corn-fields. They will employ their talents according to their habits and their interests. They will not follow the plough whilst they can direct treasuries, and govern provinces.

Your legislators, in every thing new, are the very first who have founded a commonwealth upon gaming, and infused this spirit into it as its vital breath. The great object in these politics is to metamorphose France, from a great kingdom into one great playtable; to turn its inhabitants into a nation of gamesters; to make speculation as extensive as life; to mix it with all its concerns; and to divert the whole of the hopes and fears of the people from their usual channels, into the impulses, passions, and superstitions of those who live on chances. They loudly proclaim their opinion, that this their present

system of a republic cannot possibly exist without this kind of gaming fund; and that the very thread of its life is spun out of the staple of these speculations. The old gaming in funds was mischievous enough undoubtedly; but it was so only to individuals. Even when it had its greatest extent, in the Mississippi and South Sea, it affected but few, comparatively; where it extends further, as in lotteries, the spirit has but a single object. But where the law, which in most circumstances forbids, and in none countenances gaming, is itself debauched, so as to reverse its nature and policy, and expressly to force the subject to this destructive table, by bringing the spirit and symbols of gaming into the minutest matters, and engaging every body in it, and in every thing, a more dreadful epidemic distemper of that kind is spread than yet has appeared in the world. With you a man can neither earn nor buy his dinner, without a speculation. What he receives in the morning will not have the same value at night. What he is compelled to take as pay for an old debt, will not be received as the same when he comes to pay a debt contracted by himself; nor will it be the same when by prompt payment he would avoid contracting any debt at all. Industry must wither away. Œconomy must be driven from your country. Careful provision will have no existence. Who will labour without knowing the amount of his pay? Who will study to increase what none can estimate? Who will accumulate, when he does not know the value of what he saves? If you abstract it from its uses in gaming, to accumulate your paper wealth, would be not the providence of a man, but the distempered instinct of a jackdaw.

The truly melancholy part of the policy of systematically making a nation of gamesters is this; that though all are forced to play, few can understand the game; and fewer still are in a condition to avail themselves of that knowledge. The many must be the dupes of the few who conduct the machine of these speculations. What effect it must have on the country-people is visible. The townsman can calculate from day to day: not so the inhabitant of the country. When the peasant first brings his corn to market, the magistrate in the towns obliges him to take the assignat at par; when he goes to the shop with his money, he finds it seven per cent. the worse for crossing the way. This market he will not readily resort to again. The towns-people will be inflamed! they will force the country-people to bring their corn. Resistance will begin, and the murders of Paris and St. Denis may be renewed all through France.

What signifies the empty compliment paid to the country by giving it perhaps more than its share in the theory of your representation? Where have you placed the real power over monied and landed circulation? Where have you placed the means of raising and falling the value of every man's freehold? Those whose operations can take from, or add ten per cent. to, the possessions of every man in France, must be the masters of every man in France. The whole of the power obtained by this revolution will settle in the towns among the burghers, and the monied directors who lead them. The landed gentleman, the yeoman, and the peasant, have, none of them, habits, or inclinations, or experience, which can lead them to any share in this the sole source of power and influence now left in France. The very nature of a country life, the very nature of landed property, in all the occupations, and all the pleasures they afford, render combination and arrangement (the sole way of procuring and exerting influence) in a manner impossible among country-people. Combine them by all the art you can, and all the industry, they are always dissolving into individuality. Any thing in the nature of incorporation is almost impracticable among them. Hope, fear, alarm, jealousy, the ephemerous tale that does its business and dies in a day, all these things, which are the reins and spurs by which leaders check or urge the minds of followers, are not easily employed, or hardly at all, among scattered people. They assemble, they arm, they act with the utmost difficulty, and at the greatest charge. Their efforts, if ever they can be commenced, cannot be sustained. They cannot proceed systematically. If the country gentlemen attempt an influence through the mere income of their property, what is it to that of those who have ten times their income to sell, and who can ruin their property by bringing their plunder to meet it at market? If the landed man wishes to mortgage, he falls the value of his land, and raises the value of assignats. He augments the power of his enemy by the very means he must take to contend with him. The country gentlemen therefore, the officer by sea and land, the man of liberal views and habits, attached to no profession, will be as completely excluded from the government of his country as if he were legislatively proscribed. It is obvious, that in the towns, all the things which conspire against the country gentlemen, combine in favour of the money

manager and director. In towns combination is natural. The habits of burghers, their occupations, their diversion, their business, their idleness, continually bring them into mutual contact. Their virtues and their vices are sociable; they are always in garrison; and they come embodied and half disciplined into the hands of those who mean to form them for civil or military action.

All these considerations leave no doubt on my mind, that if this monster of a constitution can continue, France will be wholly governed by the agitators in corporations, by societies in the towns formed of directors in assignats, and trustees for the sale of church lands, attornies, agents, money jobbers, speculators, and adventurers, composing an ignoble oligarchy, founded on the destruction of the crown, the church, the nobility, and the people. Here end all the deceitful dreams and visions of the equality and rights of men. In "the Serbonian bog" of this base oligarchy they are all absorbed, sunk, and lost for ever.

Though human eyes cannot trace them, one would be tempted to think some great offences in France must cry to heaven, which has thought fit to punish it with a subjection to a vile and inglorious domination, in which no comfort or compensation is to be found in any, even of those false splendours, which, playing about other tyrannies, prevent mankind from feeling themselves dishonoured even whilst they are oppressed. I must confess I am touched with a sorrow, mixed with some indignation, at the conduct of a few men, once of great rank, and still of great character, who, deluded with specious names, have engaged in a business too deep for the line of their understanding to fathom; who have lent their fair reputation and the authority of their high-sounding names, to the designs of men with whom they could not be acquainted; and have thereby made their very virtues operate to the ruin of their country.

So far as to the first cementing principle.

The second material of cement for their new republic is the superiority of the city of Paris; and this I admit is strongly connected with the other cementing principle of paper circulation and confiscation. It is in this part of the project we must look for the cause of the destruction of all the old bounds of provinces and jurisdictions, ecclesiastical and secular, and the dissolution of all ancient combinations of things, as well as the formation of so many small unconnected republics. The power of the city of Paris is evidently one great spring of all their politics. It is through the power of Paris, now become the centre and focus of jobbing, that the leaders of this faction direct, or rather command, the whole legislative and the whole executive government. Every thing therefore must be done which can confirm the authority of that city over the other republics. Paris is compact; she has an enormous strength, wholly disproportioned to the force of any of the square republics; and this strength is collected and condensed within a narrow compass. Paris has a natural and easy connection of its parts, which will not be affected by any scheme of a geometrical constitution, nor does it much signify whether its proportion of representation be more or less, since it has the whole draft of fishes in its dragnet. The other divisions of the kingdom being hackled and torn to pieces, and separated from all their habitual means, and even principles of union, cannot, for some time at least, confederate against her. Nothing was to be left in all the subordinate members, but weakness, disconnection, and confusion. To confirm this part of the plan, the assembly has lately come to a resolution, that no two of their republics shall have the same commander in chief.

To a person who takes a view of the whole, the strength of Paris thus formed, will appear a system of general weakness. It is boasted that the geometrical policy has been adopted, that all local ideas should be sunk, and that the people should be no longer Gascons, Picards, Bretons, Normans, but Frenchmen, with one country, one heart, and one assembly. But instead of being all Frenchmen, the greater likelihood is, that the inhabitants of that region will shortly have no country. No man ever was attached by a sense of pride, partiality, or real affection, to a description of square measurements. He never will glory in belonging to the Chequer No. 71, or to any other badge-ticket. We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We pass on to our neighbourhoods, and our habitual provincial connections. These are inns and resting places. Such divisions of our country as have been formed by habit, and not by a sudden jerk of authority, were so many little images of the great country in which the heart found something which it could fill. The love to the whole is not extinguished by this subordinate partiality. Perhaps it is a sort of elemental training to those higher and more large regards, by which alone men come to be affected, as with their own concern, in the prosperity of a kingdom so extensive as that of France. In that general

territory itself, as in the old name of provinces, the citizens are interested from old prejudices and unreasoned habits, and not on account of the geometric properties of its figure. The power and pre-eminence of Paris does certainly press down and hold these republics together as long as it lasts. But, for the reasons I have already given you, I think it cannot last very long.

Passing from the civil creating and the civil cementing principles of this constitution, to the national assembly, which is to appear and act as sovereign, we see a body in its constitution with every possible power, and no possible external controul. We see a body without fundamental laws, without established maxims, without respected rules of proceeding, which nothing can keep firm to any system whatsoever. Their idea of their powers is always taken at the utmost stretch of legislative competency, and their examples for common cases, from the exception of the most urgent necessity. The future is to be in most respects like the present assembly; but, by the mode of the new elections and the tendency of the new circulations, it will be purged of the small degree of internal controul existing in a minority chosen originally from various interests, and preserving something of their spirit. If possible, the next assembly must be worse than the present. The present, by destroying and altering every thing, will leave to their successors apparently nothing popular to do. They will be roused by emulation and example to enterprises the boldest and the most absurd. To suppose such an assembly sitting in perfect quietude is ridiculous.

Your all-sufficient legislators, in their hurry to do every thing at once, have forgot one thing that seems essential, and which, I believe, never has been before, in the theory or the practice, omitted by any projector of a republic. They have forgot to constitute a *senate*, or something of that nature and character. Never, before this time, was heard of a body politic composed of one legislative and active assembly, and its executive officers, without such a council; without something to which foreign states might connect themselves; something to which, in the ordinary detail of government, the people could look up; something which might give a bias and steadiness, and preserve something like consistency in the proceedings of state. Such a body kings generally have as a council. A monarchy may exist without it; but it seems to be in the very essence of a republican government. It holds a sort of middle place between the supreme power exercised by the people, or immediately delegated from them, and the mere executive. Of this there are no traces in your constitution; and in providing nothing of this kind, your Solons and Numas have, as much as in any thing else, discovered a sovereign incapacity.

Let us now turn our eyes to what they have done towards the formation of an executive power. For this they have chosen a degraded king. This their first executive officer is to be a machine, without any sort of deliberative discretion in any one act of his function. At best he is but a channel to convey to the national assembly such matter as may import that body to know. If he had been made the exclusive channel, the power would not have been without its importance; though infinitely perilous to those who would choose to exercise it. But public intelligence and statement of facts may pass to the assembly, with equal authenticity, through any other conveyance. As to the means, therefore, of giving a direction to measures by the statement of an authorized reporter, this office of intelligence is as nothing.

To consider the French scheme of an executive officer, in its two natural divisions of civil and political—In the first it must be observed, that, according to the new constitution, the higher parts of judicature, in either of its lines, are not in the king. The king of France is not the fountain of justice. The judges, neither the original nor the appellate, are of his nomination. He neither proposes the candidates, nor has a negative on the choice. He is not even the public prosecutor. He serves only as a notary to authenticate the choice made of the judges in the several districts. By his officers he is to execute their sentence. When we look into the true nature of his authority, he appears to be nothing more than a chief of bumbailiffs, serjeants at mace, catchpoles, jailers, and hangmen. It is impossible to place any thing called royalty in a more degrading point of view. A thousand times better had it been for the dignity of this unhappy prince, that he had nothing at all to do with the administration of justice, deprived as he is of all that is venerable, and all that is consolatory in that function, without power of originating any process; without a power of suspension, mitigation, or pardon. Every thing in justice that is vile and odious is thrown upon him. It was not for nothing that the assembly has been at such pains to remove the stigma from certain offices, when they were resolved to place the person who had

lately been their king in a situation but one degree above the executioner, and in an office nearly of the same quality. It is not in nature, that situated as the king of the French now is, he can respect himself, or can be respected by others.

View this new executive officer on the side of his political capacity, as he acts under the orders of the national assembly. To execute laws is a royal office; to execute orders is not to be a king. However, a political executive magistracy, though merely such, is a great trust. It is a trust indeed that has much depending upon its faithful and diligent performance, both in the person presiding in it and in all its subordinates. Means of performing this duty ought to be given by regulation; and dispositions towards it ought to be infused by the circumstances attendant on the trust. It ought to be environed with dignity, authority, and consideration, and it ought to lead to glory. The office of execution is an office of exertion. It is not from impotence we are to expect the tasks of power. What sort of person is a king to command executory service, who has no means whatsoever to reward it? Not in a permanent office; not in a grant of land; no, not in a pension of fifty pounds a year; not in the vainest and most trivial title. In France the king is no more the fountain of honour than he is the fountain of justice. All rewards, all distinctions are in other hands. Those who serve the king can be actuated by no natural motive but fear; by a fear of every thing except their master. His functions of internal coercion are as odious, as those which he exercises in the department of justice. If relief is to be given to any municipality, the assembly gives it. If troops are to be sent to reduce them to obedience to the assembly, the king is to execute the order; and upon every occasion he is to be spattered over with the blood of his people. He has no negative; yet his name and authority is used to enforce every harsh decree. Nay, he must concur in the butchery of those who shall attempt to free him from his imprisonment, or shew the slightest attachment to his person or to his ancient authority.

Executive magistracy ought to be constituted in such a manner, that those who compose it should be disposed to love and to venerate those whom they are bound to obey. A purposed neglect, or, what is worse, a literal but perverse and malignant obedience, must be the ruin of the wisest councils. In vain will the law attempt to anticipate or to follow such studied neglects and fraudulent attentions. To make them act zealously is not in the competence of law. Kings, even such as are truly kings, may and ought to bear the freedom of subjects that are obnoxious to them. They may too, without derogating from themselves, bear even the authority of such persons if it promotes their service. Louis the XIIIth mortally hated the cardinal de Richelieu; but his support of that minister against his rivals was the source of all the glory of his reign, and the solid foundation of his throne itself. Louis the XIVth, when come to the throne, did not love the cardinal Mazarin; but for his interests he preserved him in power. When old, he detested Louvois; but for years, whilst he faithfully served his greatness, he endured his person. When George the II. took Mr. Pitt, who certainly was not agreeable to him, into his councils, he did nothing which could humble a wise sovereign. But these ministers, who were chosen by affairs, not by affections, acted in the name of, and in trust for, king; and not as their avowed, constitutional, and ostensible masters. I think it impossible that any king, when he has recovered his first terrours, can cordially infuse vivacity and vigour into measures which he knows to be dictated by those who he must be persuaded are in the highest degree ill affected to his person. Will any ministers, who serve such a king (or whatever he may be called) with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day in his name they had committed to the Bastile? will they obey the orders of those whom, whilst they were exercising despotic justice upon them, they conceived they were treating with lenity; and from whom, in a prison, they thought they had provided an asylum? If you expect such obedience, among your other innovations and regenerations, you ought to make a revolution in nature, and provide a new constitution for the human mind. Otherwise, your supreme government cannot harmonize with its executory system. There are cases in which we cannot take up with names and abstractions. You may call half a dozen leading individuals, whom we have reason to fear and hate, the nation. It makes no other difference, than to make us fear and hate them the more. If it had been thought justifiable and expedient to make such a revolution by such means, and through such persons, as you have made yours, it would have been more wise to have completed the business of the fifth and sixth of October. The new executive officer would then owe his situation to those who are his creators as well as his masters; and he might be bound in interest, in

the society of crime, and (if in crimes there could be virtues) in gratitude to serve those who had promoted him to a place of great lucre and great sensual indulgence; and of something more: for more he must have received from those who certainly would not have limited an aggrandized creature, as they have done a submitting antagonist.

A king circumstanced as the present, if he is totally stupified by his misfortunes, so as to think it not the necessity, but the premium and privilege of life, to eat and sleep, without any regard to glory, can never be fit for the office. If he feels as men commonly feel, he must be sensible, that an office so circumstanced is one in which he can obtain no fame or reputation. He has no generous interest that can excite him to action. At best, his conduct will be passive and defensive. To inferiour people such an office might be matter of honour. But to be raised to it, and to descend to it, are different things, and suggest different sentiments. Does he *really* name the ministers? They will have a sympathy with him. Are they forced upon him? The whole business between them and the nominal king will be mutual counteraction. In all other countries, the office of ministers of state is of the highest dignity. In France it is full of peril and incapable of glory. Rivals however they will have in their nothingness, whilst shallow ambition exists in the world, or the desire of a miserable salary is an incentive to short-sighted avarice. Those competitors of the ministers are enabled by your constitution to attack them in their vital parts, whilst they have not the means of repelling their charges in any other than the degrading character of culprits. The ministers of state in France are the only persons in that country who are incapable of a share in the national councils. What ministers! What councils! What a nation!—But they are responsible. It is a poor service that is to be had from responsibility. The elevation of mind, to be derived from fear, will never make a nation glorious. Responsibility prevents crimes. It makes all attempts against the laws dangerous. But for a principle of active and zealous service, none but idiots could think of it. Is the conduct of a war to be trusted to a man who may abhor its principle; who, in every step he may take to render it successful, confirms the power of those by whom he is oppressed? Will foreign states seriously treat with him who has no prerogative of peace or war; no, not so much as in a single vote by himself or his ministers, or by any one whom he can possibly influence? A state of contempt is not a state for a prince: better get rid of him at once.

I know it will be said that these honours in the court and executive government will continue only through this generation; and that the king has been brought to declare the dauphin shall be educated in a conformity to his situation. If he is made to conform to his situation, he will have no education at all. His training must be worse even than that of an arbitrary monarch. If he reads—whether he reads or not, some good or evil genius will tell him his ancestors were kings. Thenceforward his object must be to assert himself, and to avenge his parents. This you will say is not his duty. That may be; but it is nature; and whilst you pique nature against you, you do unwisely to trust to duty. In this futile scheme of polity, the state nurses in its bosom, for the present, a source of weakness, perplexity, counteraction, inefficiency, and decay; and it prepares the means of its final ruin. In short, I see nothing in the executive force (I cannot call it authority) that has even an appearance of vigour, or that has the smallest degree of just correspondence or symmetry, or amicable relation with the supreme power, either as it now exists, or as it is planned for the future government.

You have settled, by an oeconomy as perverted as the policy, two* establishments of government; one real, one fictitious. Both maintained at a vast expense; but the fictitious at, I think, the greatest. Such a machine as the latter is not worth the grease of its wheels. The expense is exorbitant; and neither the show nor the use deserve the tenth part of the charge. Oh! but I don't do justice to the talents of the legislators: I don't allow, as I ought to do, for necessity. Their scheme of executive force was not their choice. This pageant must be kept. The people would not consent to part with it. Right; I understand you. You do, in spite of your grand theories, to which you would have heaven and earth to bend, you do know how to conform yourselves to the nature and circumstances of things. But when you were obliged to conform thus far to circumstances, you ought to have carried your submission farther, and to have made what you were obliged to take, a proper instrument, and useful to its end. That was in your power. For instance, among many others, it was in your power to leave to your king the right of peace and war. What; to leave to the ex-

* In reality three, to reckon the provincial republican establishments.

cutive magistrate the most dangerous of all prerogatives? I know none more dangerous; nor any one more necessary to be so trusted. I do not say that this prerogative ought to be trusted to your king, unless he enjoyed other auxiliary trusts along with it, which he does not now hold. But, if he did possess them, hazardous as they are undoubtedly, advantages would arise from such a constitution, more than compensating the risk. There is no other way of keeping the several potentates of Europe from intriguing distinctly and personally with the members of your assembly, from intermeddling in all your concerns, and fomenting, in the heart of your country, the most pernicious of all factions; factions in the interest and under the direction of foreign powers. From that worst of evils, thank God, we are still free. Your skill, if you had any, would be well employed to find out indirect correctives and controuls upon this perilous trust. If you did not like those which in England we have chosen, your leaders might have exerted their abilities in contriving better. If it were necessary to exemplify the consequences of such an executive government as yours, in the management of great affairs, I should refer you to the reports of M. de Montmorin to the national assembly, and all the other proceedings relative to the differences between Great Britain and Spain. It would be treating your understanding with disrespect to point them out to you.

I hear that the persons who are called ministers have signified an intention of resigning their places. I am rather astonished that they have not resigned long since. For the universe I would not have stood in the situation in which they have been for this last twelvemonth. They wished well, I take it for granted, to the revolution. Let this fact be as it may, they could not, placed as they were upon an eminence, though an eminence of humiliation, but be the first to see collectively, and to feel each in his own department, the evils which have been produced by that revolution. In every step which they took, or forbore to take, they must have felt the degraded situation of their country, and their utter incapacity of serving it. They are in a species of subordinate servitude, in which no men before them were ever seen. Without confidence from their sovereign, on whom they were forced, or from the assembly who forced them upon him, all the noble functions of their office are executed by committees of the assembly, without any regard whatsoever to their personal, or their official authority. They are to execute, without power; they are to be responsible, without discretion; they are to deliberate, without choice. In their puzzled situation, under two sovereigns, over neither of whom they have any influence, they must act in such a manner as (in effect, whatever they may intend) sometimes to betray the one, sometimes the other, and always to betray themselves. Such has been their situation; such must be the situation of those who succeed them. I have much respect, and many good wishes, for Mr. Necker. I am obliged to him for attentions. I thought when his enemies had driven him from Versailles, that his exile was a subject of most serious congratulation—*sed multæ urbes et publica vota vicerunt*. He is now sitting on the ruins of the finances, and of the monarchy of France.

A great deal more might be observed on the strange constitution of the executory part of the new government; but fatigue must give bounds to the discussion of subjects, which in themselves have hardly any limits.

As little genius and talent am I able to perceive in the plan of judicature formed by the national assembly. According to their invariable course, the framers of your constitution have begun with the utter abolition of the parliaments. These venerable bodies, like the rest of the old government, stood in need of reform, even though there should be no change made in the monarchy. They required several more alterations to adapt them to the system of a free constitution. But they had particulars in their constitution, and those not a few, which deserved approbation from the wise. They possessed one fundamental excellence; they were independent. The most doubtful circumstance attendant on their office, that of its being vendible, contributed however to this independency of character. They held for life. Indeed they may be said to have held by inheritance. Appointed by the monarch, they were considered as nearly out of his power. The most determined exertions of that authority against them only shewed their radical independence. They composed permanent bodies politic, constituted to resist arbitrary innovation; and from that corporate constitution, and from most of their forms, they were well calculated to afford both certainty and stability to the laws. They had been a safe asylum to secure these laws, in all the revolutions of humour and opinion. They had saved that sacred deposit of the country during the reigns of arbitrary princes, and the struggles of arbitrary factions. They kept alive the memory and record of the constitution.

They were the great security to private property; which might be said (when personal liberty had no existence) to be, in fact, as well guarded in France as in any other country. Whatever is supreme in a state, ought to have, as much as possible, its judicial authority so constituted as not only not to depend upon it, but in some sort to balance it. It ought to give a security to its justice against its power. It ought to make its judicature, as it were, something exteriour to the state.

These parliaments had furnished, not the best certainty, but some considerable corrective to the excesses and vices of the monarchy. Such an independent judicature was ten times more necessary when a democracy became the absolute power of the country. In that constitution, elective, temporary, local judges, such as you have contrived, exercising their dependent functions in a narrow society, must be the worst of all tribunals. In them it will be vain to look for any appearance of justice towards strangers, towards the obnoxious rich, towards the minority of routed parties, towards all those who in the election have supported unsuccessful candidates. It will be impossible to keep the new tribunals clear of the worst spirit of faction. All contrivances by ballot, we know experimentally to be vain and childish to prevent a discovery of inclinations. Where they may the best answer the purposes of concealment, they answer to produce suspicion, and this is a still more mischievous cause of partiality.

If the parliaments had been preserved, instead of being dissolved at so ruinous a change to the nation, they might have served in this new commonwealth, perhaps not precisely the same (I do not mean an exact parallel) but near the same purposes as the court and senate of Areopagus did in Athens; that is, as one of the balances and correctives to the evils of a light and unjust democracy. Every one knows that this tribunal was the great stay of that state; every one knows with what care it was upheld, and with what a religious awe it was consecrated. The parliaments were not wholly free from faction, I admit; but this evil was exteriour and accidental, and not so much the vice of their constitution itself, as it must be in your new contrivance of sexennial elective judicatories. Several English commend the abolition of the old tribunals, as supposing that they determined every thing by bribery and corruption. But they have stood the test of monarchic and republican scrutiny. The court was well disposed to prove corruption on those bodies when they were dissolved in 1771.—Those who have again dissolved them would have done the same if they could—but both inquisitions having failed, I conclude, that gross pecuniary corruption must have been rather rare among them.

It would have been prudent, along with the parliaments, to preserve their ancient power of registering, and of remonstrating at least, upon all the decrees of the national assembly, as they did upon those which passed in the time of the monarchy. It would be a means of squaring the occasional decrees of a democracy to some principles of general jurisprudence. The vice of the ancient democracies, and one cause of their ruin, was, that they ruled, as you do, by occasional decrees, *psephismata*. This practice soon broke in upon the tenour and consistency of the laws; it abated the respect of the people towards them; and totally destroyed them in the end.

Your vesting the power of remonstrance, which, in the time of the monarchy, existed in the parliament of Paris, in your principal executive officer, whom, in spite of common sense, you persevere in calling king, is the height of absurdity. You ought never to suffer remonstrance from him who is to execute. This is to understand neither council nor execution; neither authority nor obedience. The person whom you call king, ought not to have this power, or he ought to have more.

Your present arrangement is strictly judicial. Instead of imitating your monarchy, and seating your judges on a bench of independence, your object is to reduce them to the most blind obedience. As you have changed all things, you have invented new principles of order. You first appoint judges, who, I suppose, are to determine according to law, and then you let them know, that, at some time or other, you intend to give them some law by which they are to determine. Any studies which they have made (if any they have made) are to be useless to them. But to supply these studies, they are to be sworn to obey all the rules, orders, and instructions, which from time to time they are to receive from the national assembly. These if they submit to, they leave no ground of law to the subject. They become complete and most dangerous instruments in the hands of the governing power, which, in the midst of a cause, or on the prospect of it, may wholly change the rule of decision. If these orders of the national assembly come to be contrary to the will of the people, who locally choose those judges, such confusion must happen as

is terrible to think of. For the judges owe their place to the local authority; and the commands they are sworn to obey come from those who have no share in their appointment. In the mean time they have the example of the court of *Chatelet* to encourage and guide them in the exercise of their functions. That court is to try criminals sent to it by the national assembly, or brought before it by other courses of delation. They sit under a guard, to save their own lives. They know not by what law they judge, nor under what authority they act, nor by what tenure they hold. It is thought that they are sometimes obliged to condemn at peril of their lives. This is not perhaps certain, nor can it be ascertained; but when they acquit, we know they have seen the persons whom they discharge, with perfect impunity to the actors, hanged at the door of their court.

The assembly indeed promises that they will form a body of law, which shall be short, simple, clear, and so forth. That is, by their short laws, they will leave much to the discretion of the judge; whilst they have exploded the authority of all the learning which could make judicial discretion (a thing perilous at best) deserving the appellation of a *sound* discretion.

It is curious to observe, that the administrative bodies are carefully exempted from the jurisdiction of these new tribunals. That is, those persons are exempted from the power of the laws, who ought to be the most entirely submitted to them. Those who execute public pecuniary trusts, ought of all men to be the most strictly held to their duty. One would have thought that it must have been among your earliest cares, if you did not mean that those administrative bodies should be real sovereign independent states, to form an awful tribunal, like your late parliaments, or like our king's-bench, where all corporate officers might obtain protection in the legal exercise of their functions, and would find coercion if they trespassed against their legal duty. But the cause of the exemption is plain. These administrative bodies are the great instruments of the present leaders in their progress through democracy to oligarchy. They must therefore be put above the law. It will be said, that the legal tribunals which you have made are unfit to coerce them. They are undoubtedly. They are unfit for any rational purpose. It will be said too, that the administrative bodies will be accountable to the general assembly. This I fear is talking, without much consideration, of the nature of that assembly, or of these corporations. However, to be subject to the pleasure of that assembly, is not to be subject to law, either for protection or for constraint.

This establishment of judges as yet wants something to its completion. It is to be crowned by a new tribunal. This is to be a grand state judicature; and it is to judge of crimes committed against the nation, that is, against the power of the assembly. It seems as if they had something in their view of the nature of the high court of justice erected in England during the time of the great usurpation. As they have not yet finished this part of the scheme, it is impossible to form a direct judgment upon it. However, if great care is not taken to form it in a spirit very different from that which has guided them in their proceedings relative to state offences, this tribunal, subservient to their inquisition, *the committee of research*, will extinguish the last sparks of liberty in France, and settle the most dreadful and arbitrary tyranny ever known in any nation. If they wish to give to this tribunal any appearance of liberty and justice, they must not evoke from, or send to it, the causes relative to their own members, at their pleasure. They must also remove the seat of that tribunal out of the republic of Paris.*

Has more wisdom been displayed in the constitution of your army than what is discoverable in your plan of judicature? The able arrangement of this part is the more difficult, and requires the greater skill and attention, not only as a great concern in itself, but as it is the third cementing principle in the new body of republics, which you call the French nation. Truly it is not easy to divine what that army may become at last. You have voted a very large one, and on good appointments, at least fully equal to your apparent means of payment. But what is the principle of its discipline? or whom is it to obey? You have got the wolf by the ears, and I wish you joy of the happy position in which you have chosen to place yourselves, and in which you are well circumstanced for a free deliberation, relatively to that army, or to any thing else.

The minister and secretary of state for the war department is M. de la Tour du Pin. This gentleman, like his colleagues in administration, is a most zealous asserter of the

* For further elucidations upon the subject of all these judicatures, and of the committee of research, see M. de Calonne's work.

revolution, and a sanguine admirer of the new constitution, which originated in that event. His statement of facts, relative to the military of France, is important, not only from his official and personal authority, but because it displays very clearly the actual condition of the army in France, and because it throws light on the principles upon which the assembly proceeds, in the administration of this critical object. It may enable us to form some judgment, how far it may be expedient in this country to imitate the martial policy of France.

M. de la Tour du Pin, on the fourth of last June, comes to give an account of the state of his department, as it exists under the auspices of the national assembly. No man knows it so well; no man can express it better. Addressing himself to the national assembly, he says, "His majesty has *this day* sent me to apprise you of the multiplied disorders of which *every day* he receives the most distressing intelligence. The army (le corps militaire) threatens to fall into the most turbulent anarchy. Entire regiments have dared to violate at once the respect due to the laws, to the king, to the order established by your decrees, and to the oaths which they have taken with the most awful solemnity. Compelled by my duty to give you information of these excesses, my heart bleeds when I consider who they are that have committed them. Those, against whom it is not in my power to withhold the most grievous complaints, are a part of that very soldiery which to this day have been so full of honour and loyalty, and with whom, for fifty years, I have lived the comrade and the friend.

"What incomprehensible spirit of delirium and delusion has all at once led them astray? Whilst you are indefatigable in establishing uniformity in the empire, and moulding the whole into one coherent and consistent body; whilst the French are taught by you, at once the respect which the laws owe to the rights of man, and that which the citizens owe to the laws, the administration of the army presents nothing but disturbance and confusion. I see in more than one corps the bonds of discipline relaxed or broken; the most unheard-of pretensions avowed directly and without any disguise; the ordinances without force; the chiefs without authority; the military chest and the colours carried off; the authority of the king himself [*risum teneatis*] proudly defied; the officers despised, degraded, threatened, driven away, and some of them prisoners in the midst of their corps, dragging on a precarious life in the bosom of disgust and humiliation. To fill up the measure of all these horrours, the commandants of places have had their throats cut, under the eyes, and almost in the arms of their own soldiers.

"These evils are great; but they are not the worst consequences which may be produced by such military insurrections. Sooner or later they may menace the nation itself. *The nature of things requires* that the army should never act but as an *instrument*. The moment that, erecting itself into a deliberate body, it shall act according to its own resolutions, the *government, be it what it may, will immediately degenerate into a military democracy*; a species of political monster, which has always ended by devouring those who have produced it.

"After all this, who must not be alarmed at the irregular consultations, and turbulent committees, formed in some regiments by the common soldiers and non-commissioned officers, without the knowledge, or even in contempt of the authority of their superiours; although the presence and concurrence of those superiours, could give no authority to such monstrous democratic assemblies, [comices.]"

It is not necessary to add much to this finished picture: finished as far as its canvass admits; but, as I apprehend, not taking in the whole of the nature and complexity of the disorders of this military democracy, which, the minister at war truly and wisely observes, wherever it exists, must be the true constitution of the state, by whatever formal appellation it may pass. For, though he informs the assembly that the more considerable part of the army have not cast off their obedience, but are still attached to their duty, yet those travellers who have seen the corps whose conduct is the best, rather observe in them the absence of mutiny than the existence of discipline.

I cannot help pausing here for a moment, to reflect upon the expressions of surprise which this minister has let fall, relative to the excesses he relates. To him the departure of the troops from their ancient principles of loyalty and honour seems quite inconceivable. Surely those to whom he addresses himself know the causes of it but too well. They know the doctrines which they have preached, the degrees which they have passed, the practices which they have countenanced. The soldiers remember the 6th of October. They recollect the French guards. They have not forgot the taking of the king's castles in Paris, and at Marseilles. That the governours in both

places were murdered with impunity, is a fact that has not passed out of their minds. They do not abandon the principles laid down so ostentatiously and laboriously of the equality of men. They cannot shut their eyes to the degradation of the whole noblesse of France; and the suppression of the very idea of a gentleman. The total abolition of titles and distinctions is not lost upon them. But M. du Pin is astonished at their disloyalty, when the doctors of the assembly have taught them at the same time the respect due to laws. It is easy to judge which of the two sorts of lessons men with arms in their hands are likely to learn. As to the authority of the king, we may collect from the minister himself (if any argument on that head were not quite superfluous) that it is not of more consideration with these troops, than it is with every body else. "The king," says he, "has over and over again repeated his orders to put a stop to these excesses: but, in so terrible a crisis, *your* [the assembly's] concurrence is become indispensably necessary to prevent the evils which menace the state. *You* unite to the force of the legislative power, *that of opinion* still more important." To be sure the army can have no opinion of the power or authority of the king. Perhaps the soldier has by this time learned, that the assembly itself does not enjoy a much greater degree of liberty than that royal figure.

It is now to be seen what has been proposed in this exigency, one of the greatest that can happen in a state. The minister requests the assembly to array itself in all its terrours, and to call forth all its majesty. He desires that the grave and severe principles announced by them may give vigour to the king's proclamation. After this we should have looked for courts civil and martial; breaking of some corps, decimating others, and all the terrible means which necessity has employed in such cases to arrest the progress of the most terrible of all evils; particularly, one might expect, that a serious inquiry would be made into the murder of commandants in the view of their soldiers. Not one word of all this, or of any thing like it. After they had been told that the soldiery trampled upon the decrees of the assembly promulgated by the king, the assembly pass new decrees; and they authorize the king to make new proclamations. After the secretary at war had stated that the regiments had paid no regard to oaths *prêtés avec la plus imposante solemnité*—they propose—what? More oaths. They renew decrees and proclamations as they experience their insufficiency, and they multiply oaths in proportion as they weaken, in the minds of men, the sanctions of religion. I hope that handy abridgments of the excellent sermons of Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Helvetius, on the Immortality of the Soul, on a particular superintending Providence, and on a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, are sent down to the soldiers along with their civic oaths. Of this I have no doubt; as I understand that a certain description of reading makes no inconsiderable part of their military exercises, and that they are full as well supplied with the ammunition of pamphlets as of cartridges.

To prevent the mischiefs arising from conspiracies, irregular consultations, seditious committees, and monstrous democratic assemblies ['comitia, comices'] of the soldiers, and all the disorders arising from idleness, luxury, dissipation, and insubordination, I believe the most astonishing means have been used that ever occurred to men, even in all the inventions of this prolific age. It is no less than this:—The king has promulgated in circular letters to all the regiments his direct authority and encouragement, that the several corps should join themselves with the clubs and confederations in the several municipalities, and mix with them in their feasts and civic entertainments! This jolly discipline, it seems, is to soften the ferocity of their minds; to reconcile them to their bottle companions of other descriptions; and to merge particular conspiracies in more general associations.* That this remedy would be pleasing to the soldiers, as they are described by M. de la Tour du Pin, I can readily believe; and that, however mutinous otherwise, they will dutifully submit themselves to *these* royal proclamations. But I should question whether all this civic swearing, clubbing, and feasting, would dispose them more than at present they are disposed, to an obedience to their officers; or teach them better to submit to the austere rules of military discipline. It will make them admirable citizens after the French mode, but not quite so good soldiers after any

* Comme sa majeste y a reconnu, non une systeme d'associations particulieres, mais une reunion de voluntes de tous les Francois pour la liberte et la prosperite communes, ainsi pour le maintien de l'ordre publique; il a pense qu'il convenoit que chaque regiment prit part a ces fetes civiques pour multiplier les rapports, et referrer les liens d'union entre les citoyens et les troupes.—Lest I should not be credited, I insert the words, authorizing the troops to feast with the popular confederacies.

mode. A doubt might well arise, whether the conversations at these good tables would fit them a great deal the better for the character of *mere instruments*, which this veteran officer and statesman justly observes the nature of things always requires an army to be.

Concerning the likelihood of this improvement in discipline, by the free conversation of the soldiers with the municipal festive societies, which is thus officially encouraged by royal authority and sanction, we may judge by the state of the municipalities themselves, furnished to us by the war minister in this very speech. He conceives good hopes of the success of his endeavours towards restoring order *for the present* from the good disposition of certain regiments; but he finds something cloudy with regard to the future. As to preventing the return of confusion, "for this, the administration (says he) cannot be answerable to you, as long as they see the municipalities arrogate to themselves an authority over the troops, which your institutions have reserved wholly to the monarch. You have fixed the limits of the military authority and the municipal authority. You have bounded the action, which you have permitted to the latter over the former, to the right of requisition; but never did the letter or the spirit of your decrees authorize the commons in these municipalities to break the officers, to try them, to give orders to the soldiers, to drive them from the posts committed to their guard, to stop them in their marches ordered by the king, or, in a word, to enslave the troops to the caprice of each of the cities or even market towns through which they are to pass."

Such is the character and disposition of the municipal society which is to reclaim the soldiery, to bring them back to the true principles of military subordination, and to render them machines in the hands of the supreme power of the country! Such are the distempers of the French troops! Such is their cure! As the army is, so is the navy. The municipalities supersede the orders of the assembly, and the seamen in their turn supersede the orders of the municipalities. From my heart I pity the condition of a respectable servant of the public, like this war minister, obliged in his old age to pledge the assembly in their civic cups, and to enter with a hoary head into all the fantastic vagaries of these juvenile politicians. Such schemes are not like propositions coming from a man of fifty years wear and tear among mankind. They seem rather such as ought to be expected from those grand compounders in politics, who shorten the road to their degrees in the state; and have a certain inward fanatical assurance and illumination upon all subjects; upon the credit of which one of their doctors has thought fit, with great applause, and greater success, to caution the assembly not to attend to old men, or to any persons who valued themselves upon their experience. I suppose all the ministers of state must qualify, and take this test; wholly abjuring the errors and heresies of experience and observation. Every man has his own relish. But I think if I could not attain to the wisdom, I would at least preserve something of the stiff and peremptory dignity of age. These gentlemen deal in regeneration; but at any price I should hardly yield my rigid fibres to be regenerated by them; nor begin, in my grand climacteric, to squall in their new accents, or to stammer, in my second cradle, the elemental sounds of their barbarous metaphysics.* *Si isti mihi largiantur ut repueriscam, et in eorum canis vagiam, valde recusem!*

The imbecility of any part of the puerile and pedantic system, which they call a constitution, cannot be laid open without discovering the utter insufficiency and mischief of every other part with which it comes in contact, or that bears any the remotest relation to it. You cannot propose a remedy for the incompetence of the crown, without displaying the debility of the assembly. You cannot deliberate on the confusion of the army of the state, without disclosing the worse disorders of the armed municipalities. The military lays open the civil, and the civil betrays the military anarchy. I wish every body carefully to peruse the eloquent speech (such it is) of Mons. de la Tour du Pin. He attributes the salvation of the municipalities to the good behaviour of some of the troops. These troops are to preserve the well-disposed part of the municipalities, which is confessed to be the weakest, from the pillage of the worse disposed, which is the strongest. But the municipalities affect a sovereignty, and will command those troops which are necessary for their protection. Indeed they must command them or court them. The municipalities, by the necessity of their situation, and by the republican powers they have obtained, must, with relation to the military, be the masters, or the servants, or the confederates, or each successively; or they must make a jumble of all together, according to circumstances. What government is there to coerce the army but the municipality, or the

* The war-minister has since quitted the school and resigned his office.

municipality but the army? To preserve concord where authority is extinguished, at the hazard of all consequences, the assembly attempts to cure the distempers by the distempers themselves; and they hope to preserve themselves from a purely military democracy, by giving it a debauched interest in the municipal.

If the soldiers once come to mix for any time in the municipal clubs, cabals and confederacies, an elective attraction will draw them to the lowest and most desperate part. With them will be their habits, affections, and sympathies. The military conspiracies, which are to be remedied by civic confederacies; the rebellious municipalities, which are to be rendered obedient by furnishing them with the means of seducing the very armies of the state that are to keep them in order; all these chimeras of a monstrous and portentous policy, must aggravate the confusion from which they have arisen. There must be blood. The want of common judgment manifested in the construction of all their descriptions of forces, and in all their kinds of civil and judicial authorities, will make it flow. Disorders may be quieted in one time and in one part. They will break out in others; because the evil is radical and intrinsic. All these schemes of mixing mutinous soldiers with seditious citizens, must weaken still more and more the military connection of soldiers with their officers, as well as add military and mutinous audacity to turbulent artificers and peasants. To secure a real army, the officer should be first and last in the eye of the soldier; first and last in his attention, observance and esteem. Officers it seems there are to be, whose chief qualification must be temper and patience. They are to manage their troops by electioneering arts. They must bear themselves as candidates not as commanders. But as by such means power may be occasionally in their hands, the authority by which they are to be nominated becomes of high importance.

What you may do finally does not appear; nor is it of much moment, whilst the strange and contradictory relation between your army and all the parts of your republic, as well as the puzzled relation of those parts to each other and to the whole, remain as they are. You seem to have given the provisional nomination of the officers, in the first instance, to the king, with a reserve of approbation by the national assembly. Men who have an interest to pursue are extremely sagacious in discovering the true seat of power. They must soon perceive that those who can negative indefinitely, in reality appoint. The officers must therefore look to their intrigues in the assembly, as the sole certain road to promotion. Still, however, by your new constitution they must begin their solicitation at court.

This double negotiation for military rank seems to me a contrivance as well adapted, as if it were studied for no other end, to promote faction in the assembly itself, relative to this vast military patronage; and then to poison the corps of officers with factions of a nature still more dangerous to the safety of government, upon any bottom on which it can be placed, and destructive in the end to the efficacy of the army itself. Those officers, who lose the promotions intended for them by the crown, must become of a faction opposite to that of the assembly which has rejected their claims, and must nourish discontents in the heart of the army against the ruling powers. Those officers, on the other hand, who, by carrying their point through an interest in the assembly, feel themselves to be at best only second in the good-will of the crown, though first in that of the assembly, must slight an authority which would not advance and could not retard their promotion. If to avoid these evils you will have no other rule for command or promotion than seniority, you will have an army of formality; at the same time it will become more independent, and more of a military republic. Not they, but the king is the machine. A king is not to be deposed by halves. If he is not every thing in the command of an army, he is nothing. What is the effect of a power placed nominally at the head of the army, who to that army is no object of gratitude, or or fear? Such a cypher is not fit for the administration of an object, of all things the most delicate, the supreme command of military men. They must be constrained (and their inclinations lead them to what their necessities require) by a real, vigorous, effective, decided, personal authority. The authority of the assembly itself suffers by passing through such a debilitating channel as they have chosen. The army will not long look to an assembly acting through the organ of false show, and palpable imposition. They will not seriously yield obedience to a prisoner. They will either despise a pageant, or they will pity a captive king. This relation of your army to the crown will, if I am not greatly mistaken, become a serious dilemma in your politics.

It is besides to be considered, whether an assembly like yours, even supposing that it was in possession of another sort of organ through

which its orders were to pass, is fit for promoting the obedience and discipline of an army. It is known, that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious and uncertain obedience to any senate, or popular authority; and they will least of all yield it to an assembly which is to only have a continuance of two years. The officers must totally lose the characteristic disposition of military men, if they see with perfect submission and due admiration, the dominion of pleaders; especially when they find, that they have a new court to pay to an endless succession of those pleaders; whose military policy, and the genius of whose command (if they should have any) must be as uncertain as their duration is transient. In the weakness of one kind of authority, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for some time mutinous and full of faction, until some popular general, who understands the art of conciliating the soldiery, and who possesses the true spirit of command, shall draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Armies will obey him on his personal account. There is no other way of securing military obedience in this state of things. But the moment in which that event shall happen, the person who really commands the army is your master; the master (that is little) of your king, the master of your assembly, the master of your whole republic.

How came the assembly by their present power over the army? Chiefly, to be sure, by debauching the soldiers from their officers. They have begun by a most terrible operation. They have touched the central point, about which the particles that compose armies are at repose. They have destroyed the principle of obedience in the great essential critical link between the officer and the soldier, just where the chain of military subordination commences, and on which the whole of that system depends. The soldier is told he is a citizen, and has the rights of man and citizen. The right of a man, he is told, is to be his own governour, and to be ruled only by those to whom he delegates that self-government. It is very natural he should think that he ought most of all to have his choice where he is to yield the greatest degree of obedience. He will therefore, in all probability, systematically do, what he does at present occasionally; that is, he will exercise at least a negative in the choice of his officers. At present the officers are known at best to be only permissive, and on their good behaviour. In fact, there have been many instances in which they have been cashiered by their corps. Here is a second negative on the choice of the king; a negative as effectual at least as the other of the assembly. The soldiers know already that it has been a question, not ill received in the national assembly, whether they ought not to have the direct choice of their officers, or some proportion of them? When such matters are in deliberation it is no extravagant supposition that they will incline to the opinion most favourable to their pretensions. They will not bear to be deemed the army of an imprisoned king, whilst another army in the same country, with whom too they are to feast and confederate, is to be considered as the free army of a free constitution. They will cast their eyes on the other and more permanent army; I mean the municipal. That corps, they well know, does actually elect its own officers. They may not be able to discern the grounds of distinction on which they are not to elect a Marquis de la Fayette (or what is his new name) of their own. If this election of a commander in chief be a part of the rights of men, why not of theirs? They see elective justices of peace, elective judges, elective curates, elective bishops, elective municipalities, and elective commanders of the Parisian army.—Why should they alone be excluded? Are the brave troops of France the only men in that nation who are not the fit judges of military merit, and of the qualifications necessary for a commander in chief? Are they paid by the state, and do they therefore lose the rights of men? They are a part of that nation themselves, and contribute to that pay. And is not the king, is not the national assembly, and are not all who elect the national assembly, likewise paid? Instead of seeing all these forfeit their rights by their receiving a salary, they perceive that in all these cases a salary is given for the exercise of those rights. All your resolutions, all your proceedings, all your debates, all the works of your doctors of religion and politics, have industriously been put into their hands; and you expect that they will apply to their own case just as much of your doctrines and examples as suits your pleasure.

Every thing depends upon the army in such a government as yours; for you have industriously destroyed all the opinions, and prejudices, and, as far as in you lay, all the instincts which support government. Therefore the moment any difference arises between your national assembly and any part of the nation, you must have recourse to force. Nothing else is left to you; or rather you have left nothing else to yourselves. You see by the report of your war minister, that the distribution of the army is in a great measure made

with a view of internal coercion.* You must rule by an army; and you have infused into that army by which you rule, as well as into the whole body of the nation, principles which after a time must disable you in the use you resolve to make of it. The king is to call out troops to act against his people, when the world has been told, and the assertion is still ringing in our ears, that troops ought not to fire on citizens. The colonies assert to themselves an independent constitution and a free trade. They must be constrained by troops. In what chapter of your code of the rights of men are they able to read, that it is a part of the rights of men to have their commerce monopolized and restrained for the benefit of others? As the colonists rise on you, the negroes rise on them. Troops again—Massacre, torture, hanging! These are your rights of men! These are the fruits of metaphysic declarations wantonly made, and shamefully retracted! It was but the other day that the farmers of land in one of your provinces refused to pay some sorts of rents to the lord of the soil. In consequence of this your decree, that the country people shall pay all rents and dues, except those which as grievances you have abolished; and if they refuse, then you order the king to march troops against them. You lay down metaphysic propositions which infer universal consequences, and then you attempt to limit logic by despotism. The leaders of the present system tell them of their rights, as men, to take fortresses, to murder guards, to seize on kings without the least appearance of authority even from the assembly, whilst, as the sovereign legislative body, that assembly was sitting in the name of the nation—and yet these leaders presume to order out the troops which have acted in these very disorders, to coerce those who shall judge on the principles, and follow the examples, which have been guaranteed by their own approbation.

The leaders teach the people to abhor and reject all feodality as the barbarism of tyranny, and they tell them afterwards how much of that barbarous tyranny they are to bear with patience. As they are prodigal of light with regard to grievances, so the people find them sparing in the extreme with regard to redress. They know that not only certain quit-rents and personal duties, which you have permitted them to redeem (but have furnished no money for the redemption) are as nothing to those burthens for which you have made no provision at all. They know, that almost the whole system of landed property in its origin is feudal; that it is the distribution of the possessions of the original proprietors, made by a barbarous conquerour to his barbarous instruments; and that the most grievous effects of the conquest are the land rents of every kind, as without question they are.

The peasants, in all probability, are the descendants of these ancient proprietors, Romans or Gauls. But if they fail, in any degree, in the titles which they make on the principles of antiquaries and lawyers, they retreat into the citadel of the rights of men. There they find that men are equal; and the earth, the kind and equal mother of all, ought not to be monopolized to foster the pride and luxury of any men, who by nature are no better than themselves, and who, if they do not labour for their bread, are worse. They find, that by the laws of nature the occupant and subduer of the soil is the true proprietor; that there is no prescription against nature; and that the arguments (where any there are) which have been made with the landlords, during the time of slavery, are only the effect of duresse and force; and that when the people re-entered into the rights of men, those agreements were made as void, as every thing else which had been settled under the prevalence of the old feudal and aristocratic tyranny. They will tell you that they see no difference between an idler with a hat and national cockade, and an idler in a cowl or in a rochet. If you ground the title to rents on succession and prescription, they tell you from the speech of Mr. *Camus*, published by the national assembly for their information, that things ill begun cannot avail themselves of prescription; that the title of these lords was vicious in its origin; and that force is at least as bad as fraud. As to the title by succession, they will tell you, that the succession of those who have cultivated the soil is the true pedigree of property, and not rotten parchments and silly substitutions; that the lords have enjoyed their usurpation too long; and that if they allow to these lay monks any charitable pension, they ought to be thankful to the bounty of the true proprietor, who is so generous towards a false claimant to his goods.

When the peasants give you back that coin of sophistic reason, on which you have set your image and superscription, you cry it down as base money, and tell them you will pay for the future with French guards, and dragoons, and hussars. You hold up, to chastise them, the second-hand authority of a king,

* Courier Francois, 30 July, 1790. Assemblee Nationale, Numero 210.

who is only the instrument of destroying, without any power of protecting either the people or his own person. Through him it seems you will make yourselves obeyed. They answer, You have taught us that there are no gentlemen; and which of your principles teach us to bow to kings whom we have not elected? We know, without your teaching, that lands were given for the support of feudal dignities, feudal titles, and feudal offices. When you took down the cause as a grievance, why should the more grievous effect remain? As there are now no hereditary honours, and no distinguished families, why are we taxed to maintain what you tell us ought not to exist? You have sent down our old aristocratic landlords in no other character, and with no other title, but that of exactors under your authority. Have you endeavoured to make these your rent-gatherers respectable to us? No. You have sent them to us with their arms reversed, their shields broken, their impresses defaced; and so displumed, degraded, and metamorphosed, such unfeathered two-legged things, that we no longer know them. They are strangers to us. They do not even go by the names of our ancient lords. Physically they may be the same men; though we are not quite sure of that, on your new philosophic doctrine of personal identity. In all other respects they are totally changed. We do not see why we have not as good a right to refuse them their rents, as you have to abrogate all their honours, titles, and distinctions. This we have never commissioned you to do; and it is one instance, among many indeed, of your assumption of undelegated power. We see the burghers of Paris, through their clubs, their mobs, and their national guards, directing you at their pleasure, and giving that as law to you, which, under your authority, is transmitted as law to us. Through you, these burghers dispose of the lives and fortunes of us all. Why should you not attend as much to the desires of the laborious husbandman with regard to our rent, by which we are affected in the most serious manner, as you do to the demands of these insolent burghers, relative to distinctions and titles of honour, by which neither they nor we are affected at all? But we find you pay more regard to their fancies than to our necessities. Is it among the rights of man to pay tribute to his equals? Before this measure of yours, we might have thought we were not perfectly equal. We might have entertained some old habitual, unmeaning prepossession in favour of those landlords; but we cannot conceive what other view than that of destroying all respect to them, you could have made the law that degrades them. You have forbidden us to treat them with any of the old formalities of respect, and now you send troops to sabre us to bayonet us into a submission to fear and force, which you did not suffer us to yield to the mild authority of opinion.

The ground of some of these arguments is horrid and ridiculous to all rational ears; but to the politicians of metaphysics who have opened schools for sophistry, and made establishments for anarchy, it is solid and conclusive. It is obvious, that on a mere consideration of the right, the leaders in the assembly would not in the least have scrupled to abrogate the rents along with the titles and family ensigns. It would be only to follow up the principle of their reasonings, and to complete the analogy of their conduct. But they had newly possessed themselves of a great body of landed property by confiscation. They had this commodity at market; and the market would have been wholly destroyed, if they were to permit the husbandmen to riot in the speculations with which they so freely intoxicated themselves. The only security which property enjoys in any one of its descriptions, is from the interests of their rapacity with regard to some other. They have left nothing but their own arbitrary pleasure to determine what property is to be protected and what subverted.

Neither have they left any principle by which any of their municipalities can be bound to obedience; or even conscientiously obliged not to separate from the whole to become independent, or to connect itself with some other state. The people of Lyons, it seems, have refused lately to pay taxes. Why should they not? What lawful authority is there left to exact them? The king imposed some of them. The old states, methodized by orders, settled the more ancient. They may say to the assembly, Who are you, that are not our kings, nor the states we have elected, nor sit on the principles on which we have elected you? And who are we, that when we see the gabelles which you have ordered to be paid, wholly shaken off, when we see the acts of disobedience afterwards ratified by yourselves, who are we, that we are not to judge what taxes we ought or ought not to pay, and are not to avail ourselves of the same powers, the validity of which you have approved in others? To this the answer is, We will send troops. The last reason of kings, is always the first with your assembly. This military aid may serve for a time, whilst the impression of the increase of pay remains, and the vanity of

being umpires in all disputes is flattered. But this weapon will snap short, unfaithful to the hand that employs it. The assembly keep a school where, systematically, and with unremitting perseverance, they teach principles, and form regulations destructive to all spirit of subordination, civil and military—and then they expect that they shall hold in obedience an anarchic people by an anarchic army.

The municipal army, which, according to their new policy, is to balance this national army, if considered in itself only, is of a constitution much more simple, and in every respect less exceptionable. It is a mere democratic body, unconnected with the crown or the kingdom; armed, and trained, and officered at the pleasure of the districts to which the corps severally belong; and the personal service of the individuals, who compose, or the fine in lieu of personal service, are directed by the same authority.* Nothing is more uniform. If, however, considered in any relation to the crown, to the national assembly, to the public tribunals, or to the other army, or considered in a view to any coherence or connection between its parts, it seems a monster, and can hardly fail to terminate its perplexed movements in some great national calamity. It is a worse preservative of a general constitution, than the systasis of Crete, or the confederation of Poland, or any other ill-devised corrective which has yet been imagined, in the necessities produced by an ill-constructed system of government.

Having concluded my few remarks on the constitution of the supreme power, the executive, the judicature, the military, and on the reciprocal relation of all these establishments, I shall say something of the ability shewed by your legislators with regard to the revenue.

In their proceedings relative to this object, if possible, still fewer traces appear of political judgment or financial resource. When the states met, it seemed to be the great object to improve the system of revenue, to enlarge its collection, to cleanse it of oppression and vexation, and to establish it on the most solid footing. Great were the expectations entertained on that head throughout Europe. It was by this grand arrangement that France was to stand or fall; and this became, in my opinion, very properly, the test by which the skill and patriotism of those who ruled in that assembly would be tried. The revenue of the state is the state. In effect, all depends upon it, whether for support or for reformation. The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it. As all great qualities of the mind which operate in public, and are not merely suffering and passive, require force for their display, I had almost said, for their unequivocal existence, the revenue, which is the spring of all power, becomes in its administration the sphere of every active virtue. Public virtue, being of a nature magnificent and splendid, instituted for great things, and conversant about great concerns, requires abundant scope and room, and cannot spread and grow under confinement, and in circumstances straitened, narrow, and sordid. Through the revenue alone the body politic can act in its true genius and character, and therefore it will display just as much of its collective virtue, and as much of that virtue which may characterise those who move it, and are, as it were, its life and guiding principle, as it is possessed of a just revenue. For from hence not only magnanimity, and liberality, and beneficence, and fortitude, and providence, and the tutelary protection of all good arts, derive their food, and the growth of their organs, but continence, and self-denial, and labour, and vigilance, and frugality, and whatever else there is in which the mind shews itself above the appetite, are no where more in their proper element than in the provision and distribution of the public wealth. It is therefore not without reason that the science of speculative and practical finance, which must take to its aid so many auxiliary branches of knowledge, stands high in the estimation not only of the ordinary sort, but of the wisest and best men; and as this science has grown with the progress of its object, the prosperity and improvement of nations has generally increased with the increase of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flourish, as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals, and what is collected for the common efforts of the state, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a close correspondence and communication. And perhaps it may be owing to the greatness of revenues, and to the urgency of state necessities, that old abuses in the constitution of finances are discovered, and their true nature and rational theory comes to be more perfectly

* I see by Mr. Necker's account, that the national guards of Paris have received, over and above the money levied within their own city, about £.145,000 sterling out of the public treasure. Whether this be an actual payment, for the nine months of their existence, or an estimate of their yearly charge, I do not clearly perceive. It is of no great importance, as certainly they may take whatever they please.

understood; inasmuch, that a smaller revenue might have been more distressing in one period than a far greater is found to be in another; the proportionate wealth even remaining the same. In this state of things, the French assembly found something in their revenues to preserve, to secure, and wisely to administer, as well as to abrogate and alter. Though their pround assumption might justify the severest tests, yet in trying their abilities on their financial proceedings, I would only consider what is the plain obvious duty of a common finance minister, and try them upon that, and not upon models of ideal perfection.

The objects of a financier are, then, to secure an ample revenue; to impose it with judgment and equality; to employ it oeconomically; and when necessity obliges him to make use of credit, to secure its foundations in that instance, and for ever, by the clearness and candour of his proceedings, the exactness of his calculations, and the solidity of his funds. On these heads we may take a short and distinct view of the merits and abilities of those in the national assembly, who have taken to themselves the management of this arduous concern. Far from any increase of revenue in their hands, I find, by a report of M. Vernier, from the committee of finances, of the second of August last, that the amount of the national revenue, as compared with its produce before the revolution, was diminished by the sum of two hundred millions, or *eight millions sterling* of the annual income, considerably more than one-third of the whole.

If this be the result of great ability, never surely was ability displayed in a more distinguished manner, or with so powerful an effect. No common folly, no vulgar incapacity, no ordinary official negligence, even no official crime, no corruption, no peculation, hardly any direct hostility which we have seen in the modern world, could in so short a time have made so complete an overthrow of the finances, and with them, of the strength of a great kingdom.—*Cedó qu vestram rempublicam tantam amisistis tam cito?*

The sophisters and declaimers, as soon as the assembly met, began with decrying the ancient constitution of the revenue in many of its most essential branches, such as the public monopoly of salt. They charged it, as truly as unwisely, with being ill-contrived, oppressive, and partial. This representation they were not satisfied to make use of in speeches preliminary to some plan of reform; they declared it in a solemn resolution or public sentence, as it were judicially, passed upon it; and this they dispersed throughout the nation. At the time they passed the decree, with the same gravity they ordered this new absurd, oppressive, and partial tax to be paid, until they could find a revenue to replace it. The consequence was inevitable. The provinces which had been always exempted from this salt monopoly, some of whom were charged with other contributions, perhaps equivalent, were totally disinclined to bear any part of the burthen, which by an equal distribution was to redeem the others. As to the assembly, occupied as it was with the declaration and violation of the rights of men, and with their arrangements for general confusion, it had neither leisure nor capacity to contrive, nor authority to enforce any plan of any kind relative to the replacing the tax or equalizing it, or compensating the provinces, or for conducting their minds to any scheme of accommodation with the other districts which were to be relieved.

The people of the salt provinces, impatient under taxes damned by the authority which had directed their payment, very soon found their patience exhausted. They thought themselves as skilful in demolishing as the assembly could be. They relieved themselves by throwing off the whole burthen. Animated by this example, each district, or part of a district, judging of its own grievance by its own feeling, and of its remedy by its own opinion, did as it pleased with other taxes.

We are next to see how they have conducted themselves in contriving equal impositions, proportioned to the means of the citizens, and the least likely to lean heavy on the active capital employed in the generation of that private wealth, from whence the public fortune must be derived. By suffering the several districts, and several of the individuals in each district, to judge of what part of the old revenue they might withhold, instead of better principles of equality, a new inequality was produced of the most oppressive kind. Payments were regulated by dispositions. The parts of the kingdom which were the most submissive, the most orderly, or the most affectionate to the commonwealth, bore the whole burthen of the state. Nothing turns out to be so oppressive and unjust as a feeble government. To fill up all the deficiencies in the old impositions, and the new deficiencies of every kind which were to be expected, what remained to a state without authority? The national assembly called for a voluntary benevolence; for a fourth part of the income of all the citizens, to be estimated on the honour of those

who were to pay. They obtained something more than could be rationally calculated, but what was, far indeed, from answerable to their real necessities, and much less to their fond expectations. Rational people could have hoped for little from this their tax in the disguise of a benevolence; a tax weak, ineffective, and unequal; a tax by which luxury, avarice, and selfishness were screened, and the load thrown upon productive capital, upon integrity, generosity, and public spirit—a tax of regulation upon virtue. At length the mask is thrown off, and they are now trying means (with little success) of exacting their benevolence by force.

This benevolence, the ricketty offspring of weakness, was to be supported by another resource, the twin brother of the same prolific imbecility. The patriotic donations were to make good the failure of the patriotic contribution. John Doe was to become security for Richard Roe. By this scheme they took things of much price from the giver, comparatively of small value to the receiver; they ruined several trades; they pillaged the crown of its ornaments, the churches of their plate, and the people of their personal decorations. The invention of these juvenile pretenders to liberty, was in reality nothing more than a servile imitation of one of the poorest resources of doting despotism. They took an old huge full bottomed perriwig out of the wardrobe of the antiquated frippery of Louis the Fourteenth, to cover the premature baldness of the national assembly. They produced this old-fashioned formal folly, though it had been so abundantly exposed in the Memoirs of the Duke de St. Simon, if to reasonable men it had wanted any arguments to display its mischief and insufficiency. A device of the same kind was tried in my memory by Louis the Fifteenth, but it answered at no time. However, the necessities of ruinous wars were some excuse for desperate projects. The deliberations of calamity are rarely wise. But here was a season for disposition and providence. It was in a time of profound peace, then enjoyed for five years, and promising a much longer continuance, that they had recourse to this desperate trifling. They were sure to lose more reputation by sporting, in their serious situation, with these toys and playthings of finance, which have filled half their journals, than could possibly be compensated by the poor temporary supply which they afforded. It seemed as if those who adopted such projects were wholly ignorant of their circumstances, or wholly unequal to their necessities. Whatever virtue may be in these devices, it is obvious that neither the patriotic gifts, nor the patriotic contribution, can ever be resorted to again. The resources of public folly are soon exhausted. The whole indeed of their scheme of revenue is to make, by any artifice, an appearance of a full reservoir for the hour, whilst at the same time they cut off the springs and living fountains of perennial supply. The account not long since furnished by Mr. Necker was meant, without question, to be favourable. He gives a flattering view of the means of getting through the year; but he expresses, as it is natural he should, some apprehension for that which was to succeed. On this last prognostic, instead of entering into the grounds of this apprehension, in order by a proper foresight, to prevent the prognosticated evil, Mr. Necker receives a sort of friendly reprimand from the president of the assembly.

As to their other schemes of taxation, it is impossible to say any thing of them with certainty, because they have not yet had their operation; but nobody is so sanguine as to imagine they will fill up any perceptible part of the wide gaping breach which their incapacity has made in their revenues. At present the state of their treasury sinks every day more and more in cash, and swells more and more in fictitious representation. When so little within or without is now found but paper, the representative not of opulence but of want, the creature not of credit but of power, they imagine that our flourishing state in England is owing to that bank-paper, and not the bank-paper to the flourishing condition of our commerce, to the solidity of our credit, and to the total exclusion of all idea of power from any part of the transaction. They forget that, in England, not one shilling of paper-money of any description is received but of choice; that the whole has had its origin in cash actually deposited; and that it is convertible, at pleasure, in an instant, and without the smallest loss, into cash again. Our paper is of value in commerce, because in law it is of none. It is powerful on Change, because in Westminster-hall it is impotent. In payment of a debt of twenty shillings, a creditor may refuse all the paper of the bank of England. Nor is there among us a single public security, of any quality or nature whatsoever, that is enforced by authority. In fact it might be easily shewn, that our paper wealth, instead of lessening the real coin, has a tendency to increase it; instead of being a substitute for money, it only facilitates its entry, its exit, and its circulation; that it is the symbol of prosperity,

and not the badge of distress. Never was a scarcity of cash, and an exuberance of paper, a subject of complaint in this nation.

Well! but a lessening of prodigal expenses, and the œconomy which has been introduced by the virtuous and sapient assembly, make amends for the losses sustained in the receipt of revenue. In this at least they have fulfilled the duty of a financier.—Have those, who say so, looked at the expenses of the national assembly itself? of the municipalities? of the city of Paris? of the increased pay of the two armies? of the new police? of the new judicatures? Have they even carefully compared the present pension-list with the former? These politicians have been cruel, not œconomical. Comparing the expenses of the former prodigal government and its relation to the then revenues with the expenses of this new system as opposed to the state of its new treasury, I believe the present will be found beyond all comparison more chargeable.*

It remains only to consider the proofs of financial ability, furnished by the present French managers when they are to raise supplies on credit. Here I am a little at a stand; for credit, properly speaking, they have none. The credit of the ancient government was not indeed the best; but they could always, on some terms, command money, not only at home, but from most of the countries of Europe where a surplus capital was accumulated; and the credit of that government was improving daily. The establishment of a system of liberty would of course be supposed to give it new strength; and so it would actually have done, if a system of liberty had been established. What offers has their government of pretended liberty, had from Holland, from Hamburgh, from Switzerland, from Genoa, from England, for a dealing in their paper? Why should these nations of commerce and œconomy enter into any pecuniary dealings with a people, who attempt to reverse the very nature of things; among whom they see the debtor prescribing at the point of the bayonet, the medium of his solvency to the creditor; discharging one of his engagements with another; turning his very penury into his resource; and paying his interest with his rags?

Their fanatical confidence in the omnipotence of church plunder, has induced these philosophers to overlook all care of the public estate, just as the dream of the philosopher's stone induces dupes, under the more plausible delusion of the hermetic art, to neglect all rational means for improving their fortunes. With these philosophic financiers, this universal medicine made of church mummy is to cure all the evils of the state. These gentlemen perhaps do not believe a great deal in the miracles of piety; but it cannot be questioned, that they have an undoubting faith in the prodigies of sacrilege. Is there a debt which pressess them—Issue *assignats*. Are compensations to be made, or a maintenance decreed to those whom they have robbed of their freehold in their office, or expelled from their profession—*Assignats*. Is a fleet to be fitted out—*Assignats*. If sixteen millions sterling of these *assignats*, forced on the people, leave the wants of the state as urgent as ever—issue, says one, thirty millions sterling of *assignats*—says another, issue fourscore millions more of *assignats*. The only difference among their financial factions is on the greater or the lesser quantity of *assignats* to be imposed on the public sufferance. They are all professors of *assignats*. Even those, whose natural good sense and knowledge of commerce, not obliterated by philosophy, furnish decisive arguments against this delusion, conclude their arguments, by proposing the emission of *assignats*. I suppose they must talk of *assignats*, as no other language would be understood. All experience of their inefficacy does not in the least discourage them. Are the old *assignats* depreciated at market? What is the remedy? Issue new *assignats*.—*Mais si maladia, opiniatria, non vult se guerire, quid illi faciere? assignare—postea assignare; assignare assignare*. The word is a trifle altered. The Latin of your present doctors may be better than that of your old comedy; their wisdom, and the variety of their resources, are the same. They have not more notes in

* The reader will observe, that I have but lightly touched (my plan demanded nothing more) on the condition of the French Finances, as connected with the demands upon them. If I had intended to do otherwise, the materials in my hands for such a task are not altogether perfect. On this subject I refer the reader to M. de Calonne's work; and the tremendous display that he has made of the havoc and devastation in the public state, and in all the affairs of France, caused by the presumptuous good intentions of ignorance and incapacity. Such effects, those causes will always produce. Looking over that account with a pretty strict eye, and, with perhaps too much rigour, deducting every thing which may be placed to the account of a financier out of place, who might be supposed by his enemies desirous of making the most of his cause, I believe it will be found, that a more salutary lesson of caution against the daring spirit of innovators than what has been supplied at the expense of France, never was at any time furnished to mankind.

their song than the cuckow; though, far from the softness of that harbinger of summer and plenty, their voice is as harsh and as ominous as that of the raven.

Who but the most desperate adventurers in philosophy and finance could at all have thought of destroying the settled revenue of the state, the sole security for the public credit, in the hope of rebuilding it with the materials of confiscated property? If, however, an excessive zeal for the state should have led a pious and venerable prelate (by anticipation a father of the church*) to pillage his own order, and, for the good of the church and people, to take upon himself the place of grand financier of confiscation, and comptroller general of sacrilege, he and his coadjutors were, in my opinion, bound to shew, by their subsequent conduct, that they knew something of the office they assumed. When they had resolved to appropriate to the *Fisc*, a certain portion of the landed property of their conquered country, it was their business to render their bank a real fund of credit; as far as such a bank was capable of becoming so.

To establish a current circulating credit upon any *Land-bank*, under any circumstances whatsoever, has hitherto proved difficult at the very least. The attempt has commonly ended in bankruptcy. But when the assembly were led, through a contempt of moral, to a defiance of œconomical principles, it might at least have been expected, that nothing would be omitted on their part to lessen this difficulty, to prevent any aggravation of this bankruptcy. It might be expected, that to render your *Land-bank* tolerable, every means would be adopted that could display openness and candour in the statement of the security; every thing which could aid the recovery of the demand. To take things in their most favourable point of view, your condition was that of a man of a large landed estate, which he wished to dispose of for the discharge of a debt, and the supply of certain services. Not being able instantly to sell, you wished to mortgage. What would a man of fair intentions, and a commonly clear understanding, do in such circumstances? Ought he not first to ascertain the gross value of the estate; the charges of its management and disposition; the encumbrances perpetual and temporary of all kinds that effect it; then, striking a net surplus, to calculate the just value of the security? When that surplus (the only security to the creditor) had been clearly ascertained, and properly vested in the hands of trustees; then he would indicate the parcels to be sold, and the time and conditions of sale; after this, he would admit the public creditor, if he chose it, to subscribe his stock into this new fund; or he might receive proposals for an *assignat* from those who would advance money to purchase this species of security.

This would be to proceed like men of business, methodically and rationally; and on the only principles of public and private credit that have an existence. The dealer would then know exactly what he purchased; and the only doubt which could hang upon his mind would be, the dread of the resumption of the spoil, which one day might be made (perhaps with an addition of punishment) from the sacrilegious gripe of those execrable wretches who could become purchasers at the auction of their innocent fellow-citizens.

An open and exact statement of the clear value of the property, and of the time, the circumstances, and the place of sale, were all necessary, to efface as much as possible the stigma that has hitherto been branded on every kind of Land-bank. It became necessary on another principle, that is, on account of a pledge of faith previously given on that subject, that their future fidelity in a slippery concern might be established by their adherence to their first engagement. When they had finally determined on a state resource from church booty, they came, on the 14th of April 1790, to a solemn resolution on the subject; and pledged themselves to their country, "that in the statement of the public charges for each year, there should be brought to account a sum sufficient for defraying the expenses of the R. C. A. religion, the support of the ministers at the altars, the relief of the poor, the pensions to the ecclesiastics, secular as well as regular, of the one and of the other sex, in *order that the estates and goods which are at the disposal of the nation may be disengaged of all charges, and employed by the representatives, or the legislative body, to the great and most pressing exigencies of the state.*" They further engaged, on the same day, that the sum necessary for the year 1791 should be forthwith determined.

In this resolution they admit it their duty to shew distinctly the expense of the above objects, which, by other resolutions, they had before engaged should be first in the order of provision. They admit that they ought to shew the estate clear and disengaged of all charges, and that they should shew it immediately. Have they done this immediately, or at any time? Have they ever furnished a rent-

* La Bruyere of Bossuet.

roll of the immovable estates, or given in an inventory of the moveable effects which they confiscate to their assignats? In what manner they can fulfil their engagements of holding out to public service "an estate disengaged of all charges," without authenticating the value of the estate, or the quantum of the charges, I leave it to their English admirers to explain. Instantly upon this assurance, and previously to any one step towards making it good, they issue, on the credit of so handsome a declaration, sixteen millions sterling of their paper. This was manly. Who, after this masterly stroke, can doubt of their abilities in finance? —But then, before any other emission of these financial *indulgencies*, they took care at least to make good their original promise!—If such estimate, either of the value of the estate or the amount of the incumbrances, has been made, it has escaped me. I never heard of it.

At length they have spoken out, and they have made a full discovery of their abominable fraud, in holding out the church lands as security for any debts or any service whatsoever. They rob only to enable them to cheat; but in a very short time they defeat the ends both of the robbery and the fraud, by making out accounts for other purposes, which blow up their whole apparatus of force and of deception. I am obliged to M. de Calonne for his reference to the document which proves this extraordinary fact: it had by some means escaped me. Indeed it was not necessary to make out my assertion as to the breach of faith on the declaration of the 14th of April 1790. By a report of their committee it now appears, that the charge of keeping up the reduced ecclesiastical establishments, and other expenses attendant on religion, and maintaining the religious of both sexes, retained or pensioned, and the other concomitant expenses of the same nature, which they have brought upon themselves by this convulsion in property, exceeds the income of the estates acquired by it in the enormous sum of two millions sterling annually; besides a debt of seven millions and upwards. These are the calculating powers of imposture! This is the finance of philosophy! This is the result of all the delusions held out to engage a miserable people in rebellion, murder, and sacrilege, and to make them prompt and zealous instruments in the ruin of their country! Never did a state, in any case, enrich itself by the confiscations of the citizens. This new experiment has succeeded like all the rest. Every honest mind, every true lover of liberty and humanity, must rejoice to find that injustice is not always good policy, nor rapine the high road to riches. I subjoin with pleasure, in a note, the able and spirited observations of M. de Calonne on this subject.*

In order to persuade the world of the bottomless resource of ecclesiastical confiscation, the assembly have proceeded to other confiscations of estates in offices, which could not be done with any common colour without being compensated out of this grand confiscation of landed property. They have thrown upon this fund, which was to shew a surplus, disengaged of all charges, a new charge; namely, the compensation to the whole body of the disbanded judicature; and of all suppressed offices and estates; a charge which I cannot ascertain, but which unquestionably amounts to many French millions. Another of the new charges, is an annuity of four hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, to be paid (if they choose to keep faith) by daily payments, for the interest of the first assignats. Have they ever given themselves the trouble to state fairly the expense of the management of the church lands in the hands of the municipalities, to whose care, skill, and diligence, and that of their legion of unknown under agents, they have chosen to commit the charge of the forfeited estates, and the consequence

* "Ce n'est point a l'assemblee entiere que je m'adresse ici; je ne parle qu'a ceux qui l'egarent, en lui cachant sous des gazes seduisantes le but ou ils l'entrainent. C'est a eux que je dis: votre objet, vous n'en disconviendrez pas, c'est d'oter tout espoir au clerge, et de consommer sa ruine; c'est-la, en ne vous soupçonnant d'aucune combinaison de cupidite, d'aucun regard le jeu des effets publics, c'est-la ce qu'on doit croire que vous avez en vue dans la terrible operation que vous proposez; c'est ce qui doit en etre le fruit. Mais le peuple qui vous y interessez, quel avantage peut-il y trouver? En vous servant sans cesse de lui, que faites-vous pour lui? Rien, absolument rien; et, au contraire, vous faites ce qui ne conduit qu'a l'accabler de nouvelles charges. Vous avez rejete, a son prejudice, une offre de 400 millions, dont l'acceptation pouvoit devenir un moyen de soulagement en sa faveur; et a cette ressource, aussi profitable que legitime, vous avez substitue une injustice ruineuse, qui, de votre propre aveu, charge le tresor public, et parconsequent le peuple, d'un surcroit de depense annuelle de 50 millions au moins, et d'un remboursement de 150 millions.

"Malheureux peuple! voila ce que vous vaut en dernier resultat l'expropriation d'Eglise, et la dureté des decrets taxateurs du traitement des ministres d'une religion bienfaisante; desormais ils seront a votre charge: leurs charites soulageoient les pauvres; et vous allez etre imposes pour subvenir a leur entretien!"——*De l'Etat de la France*, p. 81. See also p. 92, and the following pages.

of which had been so ably pointed out by the bishop of Nancy?

But it is unnecessary to dwell on these obvious heads of incumbrance. Have they made out any clear state of the grand incumbrance of all, I mean the whole of the general and municipal establishments of all sorts, and compared it with the regular income by revenue? Every deficiency in these becomes a charge on the confiscated estate, before the creditor can plant his cabbages on an acre of church property. There is no other prop than this confiscation to keep the whole state from tumbling to the ground. In this situation they have purposely covered all that they ought industriously to have cleared, with a thick fog; and then, blindfold themselves, like bulls that shut their eyes when they push, they drive, by the point of the bayonets, their slaves, blindfolded indeed no worse than their lords, to take their fictions for currencies, and to swallow down paper pills by thirty-four millions sterling at a dose. Then they proudly lay in their claim to a future credit, on failure of all their past engagements, and at a time when (if in such a matter any thing can be clear) it is clear that the surplus estates will never answer even the first of their mortgages, I mean that of the four hundred millions (or sixteen millions sterling) of *assignats*. In all this procedure I can discern neither the solid sense of plain dealing, nor the subtle dexterity of ingenious fraud. The objection within the assembly to pulling up the flood-gates for this inundation of fraud, are unanswered; but they are thoroughly refuted by an hundred thousand financiers in the street. These are the numbers by which the metaphysic arithmeticians compute. These are the grand calculations on which a philosophical public credit is founded in France. They cannot raise supplies; but they can raise mobs. Let them rejoice in the applauses of the club at Dundee, for their wisdom and patriotism in having thus applied the plunder of the citizens to the service of the state. I hear of no address upon this subject from the directors of the bank of England; though their approbation would be of a *little* more weight in the scale of credit than that of the club at Dundee. But, to do justice to the club, I believe the gentlemen who compose it to be wiser than they appear; that they will be less liberal of their money than of their addresses; and that they would not give a dog's ear of their most rumpled and ragged Scotch paper for twenty of your fairest assignats.

Early in this year the assembly issued paper to the amount of sixteen millions sterling: What must have been the state into which the assembly has brought your affairs, that the relief afforded by so vast a supply has been hardly perceptible? This paper also felt an almost immediate depreciation of five per cent. which in a little time came to about seven. The effect of these assignats on the receipt of the revenue is remarkable. Mr. Necker found that the collectors of the revenue, who received in coin, paid the treasury in *assignats*. The collectors made seven per cent. by thus receiving in money, and accounting in depreciated paper. It was not very difficult to foresee, that this must be inevitable. It was, however, not the less embarrassing. Mr. Necker was obliged (I believe, for a considerable part, in the market of London) to buy gold and silver for the mint, which amounted to about twelve thousand pounds above the value of the commodity gained. That minister was of opinion, that whatever their secret nutritive virtue might be, the state could not live upon *assignats* alone; that some real silver was necessary, particularly for the satisfaction of those who, having iron in their hands, were not likely to distinguish themselves for patience, when they should perceive that whilst an increase of pay was held out to them in real money, it was again to be fraudulently drawn back by depreciated paper. The minister, in this very natural distress, applied to the assembly, that they should order the collectors to pay in specie what in specie they had received. It could not escape him, that if the treasury paid three per cent. for the use of a currency, which should be returned seven per cent. worse than the minister issued it, such a dealing could not very greatly tend to enrich the public. The assembly took no notice of his recommendation. They were in this dilemma—If they continued to receive the assignats, cash must become an alien to their treasury: if the treasury should refuse those paper *amulets*, or should discountenance them in any degree, they must destroy the credit of their sole resource. They seem then to have made their option; and to have given some sort of credit to their paper by taking it themselves; at the same time in their speeches they made a sort of swaggering declaration, something, I rather think, above legislative competence; that is, that there is no difference in value between metallic money and their assignats. This was a good stout proof article of faith, pronounced under an anathema, by the venerable fathers of this philosophic synod. *Credat* who will—certainly not *Judæus Apella*.

A noble indignation rises in the minds of your popular leaders, on hearing the magic lanthorn in their shew of finance compared to the fraudulent exhibitions of Mr. Law. They cannot bear to hear the sands of his Mississippi compared with the rock of the church, on which they build their system. Pray let them suppress this glorious spirit, until they shew to the world what piece of solid ground there is for their assignats, which they have not pre-occupied by other charges. They do injustice to that great, mother fraud, to compare it with their degenerate imitation. It is not true that Law built solely on a speculation concerning the Mississippi. He added the East India trade; he added the African trade; he added the farms of all the farmed revenue of France. All these together unquestionably could not support the structure which the public enthusiasm, not he, chose to build upon these bases. But these were, however, in comparison, generous delusions. They supposed, and they aimed at an increase of the commerce of France. They opened to it the whole range of the two hemispheres. They did not think of feeding France from its own substance. A grand imagination found in this flight of commerce something to captivate. It was wherewithal to dazzle the eye of an eagle. It was not made to entice the smell of a mole, nuzzling and burying himself in his mother earth, as yours is. Men were not then quite shrunk from their natural dimensions by a degrading and sordid philosophy, and fitted for low and vulgar deceptions. Above all remember, that in imposing on the imagination, the then managers of the system made a compliment to the freedom of men. In their fraud there was no mixture of force. This was reserved to our time, to quench the little glimmerings of reason which might break in upon the solid darkness of this enlightened age.

On recollection, I have said nothing of a scheme of finance which may be urged in favour of the abilities of these gentlemen, and which has been introduced with great pomp, though not yet finally adopted in the national assembly. It comes with something solid in aid of the credit of the paper circulation; and much has been said of its utility and its elegance. I mean the project for coining into money the bells of the suppressed churches. This is their alchymy. There are some follies which baffle argument; which go beyond ridicule; and which excite no feeling in us but disgust; and therefore I say no more upon it.

It is as little worth remarking any farther upon all their drawing and re-drawing, on their circulation for putting off the evil day, on the play between the treasury and the *Caisse d'Escompte*, and on all these old exploded contrivances of mercantile fraud, now exalted into policy of state. The revenue will not be trifled with. The prattling about the rights of men will not be accepted in payment for a biscuit or a pound of gun-powder. Here then the metaphysicians descend from their airy speculations, and faithfully follow examples. What examples? The examples of bankrupts. But defeated, baffled, disgraced, when their breath, their strength, their inventions, their fancies desert them, their confidence still maintains its ground. In the manifest failure of their abilities, they take credit for their benevolence. When the revenue disappears in their hands, they have the presumption, in some of their late proceedings, to value *themselves* on the relief given to the people. They did not relieve the people. If they entertained such intentions, why did they order the obnoxious taxes to be paid? The people relieved themselves in spite of the assembly.

But waving all discussion on the parties who may claim the merit of this fallacious relief, has there been, in effect, any relief to the people in any form? Mr. Bailly, one of the grand agents of paper circulation, lets you into the nature of this relief. His speech to the national assembly contained a high and laboured panegyric on the inhabitants of Paris for the constancy and unbroken resolution with which they have borne their distress and misery. A fine picture of public felicity! What! great courage and unconquerable firmness of mind to endure benefits, and sustain redress! One would think from the speech of this learned lord mayor, that the Parisians, for this twelvemonth past, had been suffering the straits of some dreadful blockade; that Henry the Fourth had been stopping up the avenues to their supply, and Sully thundering with his ordnance at the gates of Paris; when in reality they are besieged by no other enemies than their own madness and folly, their own credulity and perverseness. But Mr. Bailly will sooner thaw the eternal ice of his atlantic regions, than restore the central heat to Paris, whilst it remains "smitten with the cold, dry, petrific mace" of a false and unfeeling philosophy. Some time after this speech, that is, on the thirteenth of last August, the same magistrate, giving an account of his government at the bar of the same assembly,

expresses himself as follows: "In the month of July 1789," [the period of everlasting commemoration,] "the finances of the city of Paris were *yet* in good order; the expenditure was counterbalanced by the receipt, and she had at that time a million" [forty thousand pounds sterling] "in bank. The expenses which she has been constrained to incur, *subsequent to the revolution*, amount to 2,500,000 livres. From these expenses, and the great falling off in the product of the *free gifts*, not only a momentary, but a *total* want of money has taken place." This is the Paris, upon whose nourishment, in the course of the last year, such immense sums, drawn from the vitals of all France, have been expended. As long as Paris stands in the place of ancient Rome, so long she will be maintained by the subject provinces. It is an evil inevitably attendant on the dominion of sovereign democratic republics. As it happened in Rome, it may survive that republican domination which gave rise to it. In that case despotism itself must submit to the vices of popularity. Rome, under her emperours, united the evils of both systems; and this unnatural combination was one great cause of her ruin.

To tell the people that they are relieved by the dilapidation of their public estate, is a cruel and insolent imposition. Statesmen, before they valued themselves on the relief given to the people by the destruction of their revenue, ought first to have carefully attended to the solution of this problem:—Whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay considerably, and to gain in proportion; or to gain little or nothing, and to be disburthened of all contribution? My mind is made up to decide in favour of the first proposition. Experience is with me, and, I believe, the best opinions also. To keep a balance between the power of acquisition on the part of the subject, and the demands he is to answer on the part of the state, is a fundamental part of the skill of a true politician. The means of acquisition are prior in time and in arrangement. Good order is the foundation of all good things. To be enabled to acquire, the people, without being servile, must be tractable and obedient. The magistrate must have his reverence, the laws their authority. The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavour, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice. Of this consolation whoever deprives them, deadens their industry, and strikes at the root of all acquisition as of all conservation. He that does this is the cruel oppressor, the merciless enemy of the poor and wretched; at the same time that by his wicked speculations he exposes the fruits of successful industry, and the accumulations of fortune, to the plunder of the negligent, the disappointed, and the unprosperous.

Too many of the financiers by profession are apt to see nothing in revenue but banks, and circulations, and annuities on lives, and tontines, and perpetual rents, and all the small wares of the shop. In a settled order of the state, these things are not to be slighted, nor is the skill in them to be held of trivial estimation. They are good, but then only good, when they assume the effects of that settled order, and are built upon it. But when men think that these beggarly contrivances may supply a resource for the evils which result from breaking up the foundations of public order, and from causing or suffering the principles of property to be subverted, they will, in the ruin of their country, leave a melancholy and lasting monument of the effect of preposterous politics, and presumptuous, short-sighted, narrow-minded wisdom.

The effects of the incapacity shewn by the popular leaders in all the great members of the commonwealth are to be covered with the "all-atoning name" of liberty. In some people I see great liberty indeed; in many, if not in the most, an oppressive degrading servitude. But what is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint. Those who know what virtuous liberty is, cannot bear to see it disgraced by incapable heads, on account of their having high-sounding words in their mouths. Grand, swelling sentiments of liberty, I am sure I do not despise. They warm the heart; they enlarge and liberalize our minds; they animate our courage in a time of conflict. Old as I am, I read the fine raptures of Lucan and Corneille with pleasure. Neither do I wholly condemn the little arts and devices of popularity. They facilitate the carrying of many points of moment; they keep the people together; they refresh the mind in its exertions; and they diffuse occasional gaiety over the severe brow of moral freedom. Every politician ought to sacrifice to the graces; and to join compliance with

reason. But in such an undertaking as that in France, all these subsidiary sentiments and artifices are of little avail. To make a government requires no great prudence. Settle the seat of power; teach obedience: and the work is done. To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government*; that is, to temper together these opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought, deep reflection, a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in those who take the lead in the national assembly. Perhaps they are not so miserably deficient as they appear. I rather believe it. It would put them below the common level of human understanding. But when the leaders choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the construction of the state, will be of no service. They will become flatterers instead of legislators; the instruments, not the guides of the people. If any of them should happen to propose a scheme of liberty, soberly limited, and defined with proper qualifications, he will be immediately outbid by his competitors, who will produce something more splendidly popular. Suspicions will be raised of his fidelity to his cause. Moderation will be stigmatized as the virtue of cowards; and compromise as the prudence of traitors; until, in hopes of preserving the credit which may enable him to temper and moderate on some occasions, the popular leader is obliged to become active in propagating doctrines, and establishing powers, that will afterwards defeat any sober purpose at which he ultimately might have aimed.

But am I so unreasonable as to see nothing at all that deserves commendation in the indefatigable labours of this assembly? I do not deny that among an infinite number of acts of violence and folly, some good may have been done. They who destroy every thing certainly will remove some grievance. They who make every thing new, have a chance that they may establish something beneficial. To give them credit for what they have done in virtue of the authority they have usurped, or to excuse them in the crimes by which that authority has been acquired, it must appear, that the same things could not have been accomplished without producing such a revolution. Most assuredly they might; because almost every one of the regulations made by them, which is not very equivocal, was either in the cession of the king, voluntarily made at the meeting of the states, or in the concurrent instructions to the orders. Some usages have been abolished on just grounds; but they were such, that if they had stood as they were to all eternity, they would little detract from the happiness and prosperity of any state. The improvements of the national assembly are superficial, their errors fundamental.

Whatever they are, I wish my countrymen rather to recommend to our neighbours the example of the British constitution, than to take models from them for the improvement of our own. In the former they have got an invaluable treasure. They are not, I think, without some causes of apprehension and complaint; but these they do not owe to their constitution, but to their own conduct. I think our happy situation owing to our constitution; but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part singly; owing in a great measure to what we have left standing in our several reviews and reformations, as well as to what we have altered or superadded. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit, in guarding what they possess from violation. I would not exclude alteration neither; but even when I changed, it should be to preserve. I should be led to my remedy by a great grievance. In what I did, I should follow the example of our ancestors. I would make the reparation as nearly as possible in the style of the building. A politic caution, a guarded circumspection, a moral rather than a complexional timidity, were among the ruling principles of our forefathers in their most decided conduct. Not being illuminated with the light of which the gentlemen of France tell us they have got so abundant a share, they acted under a strong impression of the ignorance and fallibility of mankind. He that had made them thus fallible, rewarded them for having in their conduct attended to their nature. Let us imitate their caution, if we wish to deserve their fortune, or to retain their bequests. Let us add, if we please, but let us preserve what they have left; and, standing on the firm ground of the British constitution, let us be satisfied to admire, rather than attempt to follow in their desperate flights the aëronauts of France.

I have told you candidly my sentiments. I think they are not likely to alter yours. I do not know that they ought. You are young; you cannot guide, but must follow the fortune of your country. But hereafter they may be of some use to you, in some future form which your commonwealth may take. In the present it can hardly remain; but before its final settlement it may be obliged to pass, as one of

our poet says, "through great varieties of untried being," and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood.

I have little to recommend my opinions but long observation and much impartiality. They come from one who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatness; and who in his last acts does not wish to belie the tenour of his life. They come from one, almost the whole of whose public exertion has been a struggle for the liberty of others; from one in whose breast no anger durable or vehement has ever been kindled, but by what he considered as tyranny; and who snatches from his share in the endeavours which are used by good men to discredit opulent oppression, the hours he has employed on your affairs; and who in so doing persuades himself he has not departed from his usual office: they come from one who desires honours, distinctions, and emoluments, but little; and who expects them not at all; who has no contempt for fame, and no fear of obloquy; who shuns contention, though he will hazard an opinion: from one who wishes to preserve consistency; but who would preserve consistency by varying his means to secure the unity of his end; and, when the equipoise of the vessel in which he sails may be endangered by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of carrying the small weight of his reasons to that which may preserve its equipoise.

A LETTER FROM MR. BURKE

TO A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY; IN ANSWER TO SOME OBJECTIONS TO HIS BOOK ON FRENCH AFFAIRS. 1791.

Sir,—I had the honour to receive your letter of the 17th of November last; in which, with some exceptions, you are pleased to consider favourably the letter I have written on the affairs of France. I shall ever accept any mark of approbation, attended with instruction, with more pleasure than general and unqualified praises. The latter can serve only to flatter our vanity; the former, whilst it encourages us to proceed, may help to improve us in our progress.

Some of the errours you point out to me in my printed letter are really such. One only I find to be material. It is corrected in the edition which I take the liberty of sending to you. As to the cavils which may be made on some part of my remarks, with regard to the *gradations* in your new constitution, you observe justly, that they do not affect the substance of my objections. Whether there be a round more or less in the ladder of representation, by which your workmen ascend from their parochial tyranny to their federal anarchy, when the whole scale is false, appears to me of little or no importance.

I published my thoughts on that constitution, that my countrymen might be enabled to estimate the wisdom of the plans which were held out to their imitation. I conceived that the true character of those plans would be best collected from the committee appointed to prepare them. I thought that the scheme of their building would be better comprehended in the design of the architects then in the execution of the masons. It was not worth my reader's while to occupy himself with the alterations by which bungling practice corrects absurd theory. Such an investigation would be endless: because every day's past experience of impracticability has driven, and every day's future experience will drive, those men to new devices as exceptionable as the old; and which are no otherwise worthy of observation than as they give a daily proof of the delusion of their promises, and the falsehood of their professions. Had I followed all these changes, my letter would have been only a gazette of their wanderings; a journal of their march from errour to errour, through a dry dreary desert, unguided by the lights of heaven, or by the contrivance which wisdom has invented to supply their place.

I am unalterably persuaded, that the attempt to oppress, degrade, impoverish, confiscate, and extinguish the original gentlemen, and landed property of a whole nation, cannot be justified under any form it may assume. I am satisfied beyond a doubt, that the project of turning a great empire into a vestry, or into a collection of vestries, and of governing it in the spirit of a parochial administration, is senseless and absurd, in any mode, or with any qualifications. I can never be convinced, that the scheme of placing the highest powers of the state in churchwardens and constables, and other such officers, guided by the prudence of

litigious attornies, and Jew brokers, and set in action by shameless women of the lowest condition, by keepers of hotels, taverns and brothels, by pert apprentices, by clerks, shop-boys, hair-dressers, fiddlers, and dancers on the stage, (who, in such a commonwealth as yours, will in future overbear, as already they have overborne, the sober incapacity of dull uninstructed men, of useful but laborious occupations,) can never be put into any shape, that must not be both disgraceful and destructive. The whole of this project, even if it were what it pretends to be, and was not in reality the dominion, through that disgraceful medium, of half a dozen, or perhaps fewer, intriguing politicians, is so mean, so low-minded, so stupid a contrivance, in point of wisdom, as well as so perfectly detestable for its wickedness, that I must always consider the correctives which might make it in any degree practicable, to be so many new objections to it.

In that wretched state of things, some are afraid that the authors of your miseries may be led to precipitate their further designs, by the hints they may receive from the very arguments used to expose the absurdity of their system, to mark the incongruity of its parts, and its inconsistency with their own principles; and that your masters may be led to render their schemes more consistent, by rendering them more mischievous. Excuse the liberty which your indulgence authorizes me to take, when I observe to you, that such apprehensions as these would prevent all exertion of our faculties in this great cause of mankind.

A rash recourse to *force* is not to be justified in a state of real weakness. Such attempts bring on disgrace; and, in their failure, discountenance and discourage more rational endeavours. But *reason* is to be hazarded, though it may be perverted by craft and sophistry; for reason can suffer no loss nor shame, nor can it impede any useful plan of future policy. In the unavoidable uncertainty, as to the effect, which attends on every measure of human prudence, nothing seems a surer antidote to the poison of fraud than its detection. It is true the fraud may be swallowed after this discovery; and perhaps even swallowed the more greedily for being a detected fraud. Men sometimes make a point of honour not to be disabused; and they had rather fall into an hundred errours than confess one. But after all,—when neither our principles nor our dispositions, nor, perhaps, our talents, enable us to encounter delusion with delusion, we must use our best reason to those that ought to be reasonable creatures, and to take our chance for the event. We cannot act on these anomalies in the minds of men. I do not conceive that the persons who have contrived these things can be made much the better or the worse for any thing which can be said to them. They are reason proof. Here and there, some men, who were at first carried away by wild good intentions, may be led, when their first fervours are abated, to join in a sober survey of the schemes into which they had been deluded. To these only (and I am sorry to say they are not likely to make a large description) we apply with any hope. I may speak it upon an assurance almost approaching to absolute knowledge, that nothing has been done that has not been contrived from the beginning, even before the states had assembled. *Nulla nova subito insopinave surgit.* They are the same men and the same designs that they were from the first, though varied in their appearance. It was the very same animal that at first crawled about in the shape of a caterpillar, that you now see rise into the air, and expand his wings to the sun.

Proceeding, therefore, as we are obliged to proceed, that is upon an hypothesis that we address rational men, can false political principles be more effectually exposed, than by demonstrating that they lead to consequences directly inconsistent with and subversive of the arrangements grounded upon them? If this kind of demonstration is not permitted, the process of reasoning called *deductio ad absurdum*, which even the severity of geometry does not reject, could not be employed at all in legislative discussions. One of our strongest weapons against folly acting with authority, would be lost.

You know, Sir, that even the virtuous efforts of your patriots to prevent the ruin of your country have had this very turn given to them. It has been said here, and in France too, that the reigning usurpers would not have carried their tyranny to such destructive lengths, if they had not been stimulated and provoked to it by the acrimony of your opposition. There is a dilemma to which every opposition to successful iniquity must, in the nature of things, be liable. If you lie still, you are considered as an accomplice in the measures in which you silently acquiesce. If you resist, you are accused of provoking irritable power to new excesses. The conduct of a losing party never appears right: at least it never can possess the only infallible criterion of wisdom to vulgar judgments—success.

The indulgence of a sort of undefined hope, an obscure confidence, that some lurking remains of virtue, some degree of shame, might

exist in the breasts of the oppressors of France, has been among the causes which have helped to bring on the common ruin of king and people. There is no safety for honest men, but by believing all possible evil of evil men, and by acting with promptitude, decision, and steadiness on that belief. I well remember, at every epocha of this wonderful history, in every scene of this tragic business, that when your sophistic usurpers were laying down mischievous principles, and even applying them in direct resolutions, it was the fashion to say, that they never intended to execute those declarations in their rigour. This made men careless in their opposition, and remiss in early precaution. By holding out this fallacious hope, the impostors deluded sometimes one description of men, and sometimes another, so that no means of resistance were provided against them, when they came to execute in cruelty what they had planned in fraud.

There are cases in which a man would be ashamed not to have been imposed upon. There is a confidence necessary to human intercourse, and without which men are often more injured by their own suspicions than they would be by the perfidy of others. But when men, whom we *know* to be wicked, impose upon us, we are something worse than dupes. When we know them, their fair pretences become new motives for distrust. There is one case indeed, in which it would be madness not to give the fullest credit to the most deceitful of men, that is, when they make declarations of hostility against us.

I find, that some persons entertain other hopes, which I confess appear more specious than those by which at first so many were deluded and disarmed. They flatter themselves that the extreme misery brought upon the people by their folly, will at last open the eyes of the multitude, if not of their leaders. Much the contrary, I fear. As to the leaders in this system of imposture,—you know, that cheats and deceivers never can repent. The fraudulent have no resource but in fraud. They have no other goods in their magazine. They have no virtue or wisdom in their minds, to which, in a disappointment concerning the profitable effects of fraud and cunning, they can retreat. The wearing out of an old, serves only to put them upon the invention of a new delusion. Unluckily too, the credulity of dupes is as inexhaustible as the invention of knaves. They never give people possession; but they always keep them in hope. Your state doctors do not so much as pretend that any good whatsoever has hitherto been derived from their operations, or that the public has prospered in any one instance, under their management. The nation is sick, very sick, by their medicines. But the *charlatan* tells them that what is past cannot be helped;—they have taken the draught, and they must wait its operation with patience;—that the first effects indeed are unpleasant, but that the very sickness is a proof that the dose is of no sluggish operation;—that sickness is inevitable in all constitutional revolutions;—that the body must pass through pain to ease;—that the prescriber is not an empiric who proceeds by vulgar experience, but one who grounds his practice* on the sure rules of art, which cannot possibly fail. You have read, Sir, the last manifesto, or mountebank's bill, of the national assembly. You see their presumption in their promises is not lessened by all their failures in the performance. Compare this last address of the assembly, and the present state of your affairs, with the early engagements of that body; engagements which, not content with declaring, they solemnly deposed upon oath, swearing lustily, that if they were supported they would make their country glorious and happy; and then judge whether those who can write such things, or those who can bear to read them, are of *themselves* to be brought to any reasonable course of thought or action.

As to the people at large, when once these miserable sheep have broken the fold, and have got themselves loose, not from the restraint, but from the protection of all the principles of natural authority, and legitimate subordination, they become the natural prey of impostors. When they have once tasted of the flattery of knaves, they can no longer endure reason, which appears to them only in the form of censure and reproach. Great distress has never hitherto taught, and whilst the world lasts it will never teach, wise lessons to any part of mankind. Men are as much blinded by the extremes of misery as by the extremes of prosperity. Desperate situations produce desperate councils, and desperate measures. The people of France, almost generally, have been taught to look for other resources than those which can be derived from order, frugality, and industry. They are generally armed; and they are made to expect much from the use of arms. *Nihil non arrogant armis.* Besides this, the retrograde order of society has

* It is said in the last quackish address of the national assembly to the people of France, that they have not formed their arrangements upon vulgar practice; but on a theory which cannot fail, or something to that effect.

something flattering to the dispositions of mankind. The life of adventurers, gamesters, gipsies, beggars, and robbers, is not unpleasant. It requires restraint to keep men from falling into that habit. The shifting tides of fear and hope, the flight and pursuit, the peril and escape, the alternate famine and feast, of the savage and the thief, after a time, render all course of slow, steady, progressive, unvaried occupation, and the prospect only of a limited mediocrity at the end of long labour, to the last degree tame, languid, and insipid. Those who have been once intoxicated with power, and have derived any kind of emolument from it, even though but for one year, never can willingly abandon it. They may be distressed in the midst of all their power; but they will never look to any thing but power for their relief. When did distress ever oblige a prince to abdicate his authority? And what effect will it have upon those who are made to believe themselves a people of princes?

The more active and stirring part of the lower orders having got government, and the distribution of plunder, into their hands, they will use its resources in each municipality to form a body of adherents. These rulers, and their adherents, will be strong enough to overpower the discontents of those who have not been able to assert their share of the spoil. The unfortunate adventurers in the cheating lottery of plunder will probably be the least sagacious, or the most inactive and irresolute of the gang. If, on disappointment, they should dare to stir, they will soon be suppressed as rebels and mutineers by their brother rebels. Scantily fed for a while, with the offal of plunder, they will drop off by degrees; they will be driven out of sight, and out of thought; and they will be left to perish obscurely, like rats, in holes and corners.

From the forced repentance of invalid mutineers and disbanded thieves, you can hope for no resource. Government itself, which ought to constrain the more bold and dexterous of these robbers, is their accomplice. Its arms, its treasures, its all, are in their hands. Judicature, which above all things should awe them, is their creature and their instrument. Nothing seems to me to render your internal situation more desperate than this one circumstance of the state of your judicature. Many days are not passed since we have seen a set of men brought forth by your rulers for a most critical function. Your rulers brought forth a set of men, steaming from the sweat and drudgery, and all black with the smoke and soot of the forge of confiscation and robbery—*ardentis massæ fuligine lippos*, a set of men brought forth from the trade of hammering arms of proof, offensive and defensive, in aid of the enterprises, and for the subsequent protection of housebreakers, murderers, traitors, and malefactors; men, who had their minds seasoned with theories perfectly conformable to their practice, and who had always laughed at possession and prescription, and defied all the fundamental maxims of jurisprudence. To the horrour and stupefaction of all the honest part of this nation, and indeed of all nations who are spectators, we have seen, on the credit of those very practices and principles, and to carry them further into effect, these very men placed on the sacred seat of justice in the capital city of your late kingdom. We see, that in future, you are to be destroyed with more form and regularity. This is not peace; it is only the introduction of a sort of discipline in their hostility. Their tyranny is complete, in their justice; and their lanterne is not half so dreadful as their court.

One would think that out of common decency they would have given you men who had not been in the habit of trampling upon law and justice in the assembly, neutral men, or men apparently neutral, for judges, who are to dispose of your lives and fortunes.

Cromwell, when he attempted to legalize his power, and to settle his conquered country in a state of order, did not look for dispensers of justice in the instruments of his usurpation. Quite the contrary. He sought out, with great solicitude and selection, and even from the party most opposite to his designs, men of weight, and decorum of character; men unstained with the violence of the times, and with hands not fouled with confiscation and sacrilege: for he chose an *Hales* for his chief justice, though he absolutely refused to take his civic oaths, or to make any acknowledgment whatsoever of the legality of his government. Cromwell told this great lawyer, that since he did not approve his title, all he required of him was, to administer, in a manner agreeable to his pure sentiments and unspotted character, that justice without which human society cannot subsist: that it was not his particular government, but civil order itself, which as a judge he wished him to support. Cromwell knew how to separate the institutions expedient to his usurpation from the administration of the public justice of his country. For Cromwell was a man in whom ambition had not wholly suppressed, but only suspended, the sentiments of religion, and the love (as far as it could consist with his designs) of fair and honour-

able reputation. Accordingly, we are indebted to this act of his for the preservation of our laws, which some senseless asserters of the rights of men were then on the point of entirely erasing, as relics of feudality and barbarism. Besides, he gave in the appointment of that man, to that age, and to all posterity, the most brilliant example of sincere and fervent piety, exact justice, and profound jurisprudence.* But these are not the things in which your philosophic usurpers choose to follow Cromwell.

One would think, that after an honest and necessary revolution (if they had a mind that theirs should pass for such) your masters would have imitated the virtuous policy of those who have been at the head of revolutions of that glorious character. Burnet tells us, that nothing tended to reconcile the English nation to the government of king William so much as the care he took to fill the vacant bishoprics with men who had attracted the public esteem by their learning, eloquence, and piety, and above all, by their known moderation in the state. With you, in your purifying revolution, whom have you chosen to regulate the church? Mr. Mirabeau is a fine speaker—and a fine writer,—and a fine—a very fine man;—but really nothing gave more surprise to every body here, than to find him the supreme head of your ecclesiastical affairs. The rest is of course. Your assembly addresses a manifesto to France, in which they tell the people, with an insulting irony, that they have brought the church to its primitive condition. In one respect their declaration is undoubtedly true; for they have brought it to a state of poverty and persecution. What can be hoped for after this? Have not men (if they deserve the name) under this new hope and head of the church, been made bishops, for no other merit than having acted as instruments of atheists; for no other merit than having thrown the children's bread to dogs; and in order to gorge the whole gang of usurers, pedlars, and itinerant Jew-discounters at the corners of streets, starved the poor of their Christian flocks, and their own brother pastors? Have not such men been made bishops to administer in temples, in which (if the patriotic donations have not already stripped them of their vessels) the churchwardens ought to take security for the altar plate, and not so much as to trust the chalice in their sacrilegious hands, so long as Jews have assignats on ecclesiastic plunder, to exchange for the silver stolen from churches?

* See Burnet's Life of Hales.

I am told that the very sons of such Jew-jobbers have been made bishops; persons not to be suspected of any sort of *Christian* superstition, fit colleagues to the holy prelate of Autun; and bred at the feet of that Gamaliel. We know who it was that drove the money-changers out of the temple. We see too who it is that brings them in again. We have in London very respectable persons of the Jewish nation, whom we will keep: but we have of the same tribe others of a very different description,—housebreakers, and receivers of stolen goods, and forgers of paper currency, more than we can conveniently hang. These we can spare to France, to fill the new episcopal thrones: men well versed in swearing; and who will scruple no oath which the fertile genius of any of your reformers can devise.

In matters so ridiculuus, it is hard to be grave. On a view of their consequences, it is almost inhuman to treat them lightly. To what a state of savage, stupid, servile insensibility must your people be reduced, who can endure such proceedings in their church, their state, and their judicature, even for a moment! but the deluded people of France are like other madmen, who, to a miracle, bear hunger, and thirst, and cold, and confinement, and the chains and lash of their keeper, whilst all the while they support themselves by the imagination that they are generals of armies, prophets, kings, and emperours. As to a change of mind in these men, who consider infamy as honour, degradation as preferment, bondage to low tyrants as liberty, and the practical scorn and contumely of their upstart masters, as marks of respect and homage, I look upon it as absolutely impracticable. These madmen, to be cured, must first, like other madmen, be subdued. The sound part of the community, which I believe to be large, but by no means the largest part, has been taken by surprise, and is disjointed, terrified, and disarmed. That sound part of the community must first be put into a better condition, before it can do any thing in the way of deliberation or persuasion. This must be an act of power, as well as of wisdom; of power, in the hands of firm, determined patriots, who can distinguish the misled from traitors, who will regulate the state (if such should be their fortune) with a discriminating, manly, and provident mercy; men who are purged of the surfeit and indigestion of systems, if ever they have been admitted into the habit of their minds; men who will lay the foundation of a real reform, in effacing every vestige of that philosophy which pretends to have made discoveries in the *terra*

antralis of morality; men who will fix the state upon these bases of morals and politics, which are our old, and immemorial, and, I hope, will be our eternal possession.

This power, to such men, must come from *without*. It may be given to you in pity; for surely no nation ever called so pathetically on the compassion of all its neighbours. It may be given by those neighbours on motives of safety to themselves. Never shall I think any country in Europe to be secure, whilst there is established, in the very centre of it, a state (if so it may be called) founded on principles of anarchy, and which is, in reality, a college of armed fanatics, for the propagation of the principles of assassination, robbery, rebellion, fraud, faction, oppression, and impiety. *Mahomet*, hid, as for a time he was, in the bottom of the sands of Arabia, had his spirit and character been discovered, would have been an object of precaution to provident minds. What if he had erected his fanatic standard for the destruction of the Christian religion in *hoc Asia*, in the midst of the then noon-day splendour of the then civilized world? The princes of Europe, in the beginning of this century, did well not to suffer the monarchy of France to swallow up the others. They ought not now, in my opinion, to suffer all the monarchies and commonwealths to be swallowed up in the gulph of this polluted anarchy. They may be tolerably safe at present, because the comparative power of France for the present is little. But times and occasions make dangers. Intestine troubles may arise in other countries. There is a power always on the watch, qualified and disposed to profit of every conjuncture, to establish its own principles and modes of mischief, wherever it can hope for success. What mercy would these usurpers have on other sovereigns, and on other nations, when they treat their own king with such unparalleled indignities, and so cruelly oppress their own countrymen?

The king of Prussia, in concurrence with us, nobly interfered to save Holland from confusion. The same power, joined with the rescued Holland and with Great Britain, has put the emperour in the possession of the Netherlands; and secured, under that prince, from all arbitrary innovation, the ancient, hereditary constitution of those provinces. The chamber of Wetzlar has restored the bishop of Liege, unjustly dispossessed by the rebellion of his subjects. The king of Prussia was bound by no treaty, nor alliance of blood, nor had any particular reasons for thinking the emperour's government would be more mischievous or more oppressive to human nature than that of the Turk; yet on mere motives of policy that prince has interposed with the threat of all his force, to snatch even the Turk from the pounces of the imperial eagle. If this is done in favour of a barbarous nation, with a barbarous neglect of police, fatal to the human race, in favour of a nation, by principle in eternal enmity with the Christian name; a nation which will not so much as give the salutation of peace (Salam) to any of us; nor make any pact with any Christian nation beyond a truce;—if this be done in favour of the Turk, shall it be thought either impolitic, or unjust, or uncharitable, to employ the same power, to rescue from captivity a virtuous monarch (by the courtesy of Europe considered as Most Christian) who, after an intermission of one hundred and seventy-five years, had called together the states of his kingdom, to reform abuses, to establish a free government, and to strengthen his throne; a monarch, who at the very outset, without force, even without solicitation, had given to his people such a Magna Charta of privileges, as never was given by any king to any subjects?—Is it to be tamely borne by kings who love their subjects, or by subjects who love their kings, that this monarch, in the midst of these gracious acts, was insolently and cruelly torn from his palace, by a gang of traitors and assassins, and kept in close prison to this very hour, whilst his royal name and sacred character were used for the total ruin of those whom the laws had appointed him to protect?

The only offence of this unhappy monarch towards his people, was his attempt, under a monarchy, to give them a free constitution. For this, by an example hitherto unheard of in the world, he has been deposed. It might well disgrace sovereigns to take part with a deposed tyrant. It would suppose in them a vicious sympathy. But not to make a common cause with a just prince, dethroned by traitors and rebels, who proscribe, plunder, confiscate, and in every way cruelly oppress their fellow-citizens, in my opinion is to forget what is due to the honour, and to the rights of all virtuous and legal government.

I think the king of France to be as much an object both of policy and compassion as the Grand Seignior or his states. I do not conceive that the total annihilation of France (if that could be effected) is a desirable thing to Europe; or even to this, its rival nation. Provident patriots did not think it good for Rome, that even Carthage should be quite destroyed; and he was a wise Greek, wise for the general Gre-

ste, as well as a brave Lacedemo-
', and generous conquerour, who did
y the destruction of Athens, to pluck
er eye of Greece.

', Sir, what I have here said of the
of foreign princes is only the opinion
individual; who is neither the re-
e of any state, nor the organ of any
who thinks himself bound to ex-
wn sentiments with freedom and
a crisis of such importance to the
an race.

apprehensive that in speaking freely
ct of the king and queen of France,
lerate (as you fear) the execution
s designs against them. You are
Sir, that the usurpers may, and
ill, gladly lay hold of any pretext to
e very name of a king:—assuredly
ish ill to your king; but better for
live (he does not reign) than to
assive instrument of tyranny and

ly meant to shew, to the best of my
t the existence of such an executive
uch a system of republic as theirs,
n the highest degree. But in de-
g this—to *them*, at least, I can have
scovery. They only held out the
to catch those Frenchmen to whom
f king is still venerable. They cal-
duration of that sentiment; and
find it nearly expiring, they will not
nselves with excuses for extinguish-
se, as they have the thing. They
sort of navel-string to nourish their
offspring from the bowels of royalty
w that the monster can purvey for
nsistence, it will only carry the mark
a token of its having torn the womb
ma. Tyrants seldom want pretexts.
he ready minister of injustice; and
currency of false pretence and so-
ening was expedient to their designs,
under no necessity of drawing upon
ish them with that coin. But pre-
ophisms have had their day; and
their work. The usurpation no
s plausibility. It trusts to power.
that I can say, or that you can say,
them by a single hour, in the exe-
design which they have long since
d. In spite of their solemn declara-
r soothing addresses, and the multi-
which they have taken, and forced
ths, they will assassinate the king
same will no longer be necessary to
ps; but not a moment sooner. They
will probably first assassinate the queen, whenever the renewed menace of such an assassination loses its effect upon the anxious mind of an affectionate husband. At present, the advantage which they derive from the daily threats against her life, is her only security for preserving it. They keep their sovereign alive for the purpose of exhibiting him, like some wild beast at a fair; as if they had a Bajazet in a cage. They choose to make monarchy contemptible by exposing it to derision, in the person of the most benevolent of their kings.

In my opinion, their insolence appears more odious even than their crimes. The horrours of the 5th and 6th of October were less detestable than the festival of the 14th of July. There are situations (God forbid I should think that of the 5th and 6th of October one of them) in which the best men may be confounded with the worst, and in the darkness and confusion, in the press and medley of such extremities, it may not be so easy to discriminate the one from the other. The necessities created, even by ill designs, have their excuse. They may be forgotten by others, when the guilty themselves do not choose to cherish their recollection, and by ruminating their offences, nourish themselves through the example of their past, to the perpetration of future crimes. It is in the relaxation of security, it is in the expansion of prosperity, it is in the hour of dilatation of the heart, and of its softening into festivity and pleasure, that the real character of men is discerned. If there is any good in them, it appears then or never. Even wolves and tygers, when gorged with their prey, are safe and gentle. It is at such times that noble minds give all the reins to their good nature. They indulge their genius even to intemperance, in kindness to the afflicted, in generosity to the conquered; forbearing insults, forgiving injuries, overpaying benefits. Full of dignity themselves, they respect dignity in all, but they feel it sacred in the unhappy. But it is then, and basking in the sunshine of unmerited fortune, that low, sordid, ungenerous, and reptile souls swell with their hoarded poisons; it is then that they display their odious splendour, and shine out in the full lustre of their native villany and baseness. It is in that season that no man of sense or honour can be mistaken for one of them. It was in such a season, for them of political ease and security, though their people were but just emerged from actual famine, and were ready to be plunged into a gulph of penury and beggary, that your philosophic lords chose, with an ostentatious pomp and luxury, to feast an incredible number of idle and thoughtless

people collected, with art and pains, from all quarters of the world. They constructed a vast amphitheatre in which they raised a species of pillory.* On this pillory they set their lawful king and queen, with an insulting figure over their heads. There they exposed these objects of pity, and respect to all good minds, to the derision of an unthinking and unprincipled multitude, degenerated even from the versatile tenderness which marks the irregular and capricious feelings of the populace. That their cruel insult might have nothing wanting to complete it, they chose the anniversary of that day in which they exposed the life of their prince to the most imminent dangers, and the vilest indignities, just following the instant when the assassins, whom they had hired without owning, first openly took up arms against their king, corrupted his guards, surprised his castle, butchered some of the poor invalids of his garrison, murdered his governour, and like wild beasts, tore to pieces the chief magistrate of his capital city, on account of his fidelity to his service.

Till the justice of the world is awakened, such as these will go on, without admonition, and without provocation, to every extremity. Those who have made the exhibition of the 14th of July, are capable of every evil. They do not commit crimes for their designs; but they form designs that they may commit crimes. It is not their necessity, but their nature, that impels them. They are modern philosophers, which when you say of them, you express every thing that is ignoble, savage, and hard-hearted.

Besides the sure tokens which are given by the spirit of their particular arrangements, there are some characteristic lineaments in the general policy of your tumultuous despotism, which, in my opinion, indicate, beyond a doubt, that no revolution whatsoever *in their disposition* is to be expected. I mean their scheme of educating the rising generation, the principles which they intend to instil, and the sympathies which they wish to form in the mind, at the season in which it is the most susceptible. Instead of forming their young minds to that docility, to that modesty, which are the grace and charm of youth, to an admiration of famous examples, and to an averseness to any thing which approaches to pride, petulance, and self-conceit, (distempers to which that time of life is of itself sufficiently liable,) they artificially foment these evil dispositions, and even form them into springs of action. Nothing ought to be more weighed than the nature of books recommended by public authority. So recommended, they soon form the character of the age. Uncertain indeed is the efficacy, limited indeed is the extent of a virtuous institution. But if education takes in vice as any part of its system, there is no doubt but that it will operate with abundant energy, and to an extent indefinite. The magistrate, who in favour of freedom thinks himself obliged to suffer all sorts of publications, is under a stricter duty than any other, well to consider what sort of writers he shall authorise; and shall recommend, by the strongest of all sanctions, that is, by public honours and rewards. He ought to be cautious how he recommends authors of mixed or ambiguous morality. He ought to be fearful of putting into the hands of youth writers indulgent to the peculiarities of their own complexion, lest they should teach the humours of the professor, rather than the principles of the science. He ought above all, to be cautious in recommending any writer who has carried marks of a deranged understanding; for where there is no sound reason, there can be no real virtue; and madness is ever vicious and malignant.

The assembly proceeds on maxims the very reverse of these. The assembly recommends to its youth the study of the bold experimentator in morality. Every body knows that there is a great dispute among their leaders, which of them is the best resemblance of Rousseau. In truth, they all resemble him. His blood they transfuse into their minds and into their manners. Him they study; him they meditate; him they turn over in all the time they can spare from the laborious mischief of the day, or the debauches of the night. Rousseau is their canon of holy writ; in his life he is their canon of *Polycletus*; he is their standard figure of perfection. To this man and this writer, as a pattern to authors and to Frenchmen, the founderies of Paris are now running for statues, with the kettles of their poor and the bells of their churches. If an author had written like a great genius on geometry, though his practical and speculative morals were vicious in the extreme, it might appear, that in voting the statue, they honoured only the geometrician. But Rousseau is a moralist, or he is nothing. It is impossible, therefore, putting the circumstances together, to mistake their design in choosing the author, with whom they have begun to recommend a course of studies.

* The pillory (carcan) in England is generally made very high, like that raised for exposing the king of France.

Their great problem is to find a substitute for all the principles which hitherto have been employed to regulate the human will and action. They find dispositions in the mind of such force and quality, as may fit men, far better than the old morality, for the purposes of such a state as theirs, and may go much further in supporting their power, and destroying their enemies. They have therefore chosen a selfish, flattering, seductive, ostentatious vice, in the place of plain duty. True humility, the basis of the Christian system, is the low, but deep and firm foundation of all real virtue. But this, as very painful in the practice, and little imposing in the appearance, they have totally discarded. Their object is to merge all natural and all social sentiment in inordinate vanity. In a small degree, and conversant in little things, vanity is of little moment. When full grown, it is the worst of vices, and the occasional mimic of them all. It makes the whole man false. It leaves nothing sincere or trust-worthy about him. His best qualities are poisoned and perverted by it, and operate exactly as the worst. When your lords had many writers as immoral as the object of their statue (such as Voltaire and others) they chose Rousseau; because in him that peculiar vice which they wished to erect into ruling virtue, was by far the most conspicuous.

We have had the great professor and founder of *the philosophy of vanity* in England. As I had good opportunities of knowing his proceedings almost from day to day, he left no doubt on my mind, that he entertained no principle either to influence his heart, or to guide his understanding, but *vanity*. With this vice he was possessed to a degree little short of madness. It is from the same deranged eccentric vanity, that this, the insane *Socrates* of the national assembly, was impelled to publish a mad confession of his mad faults, and to attempt a new sort of glory, from bringing hardily to light the obscure and vulgar vices which we know may sometimes be blended with eminent talents. He has not observed on the nature of vanity, who does not know that it is omnivorous; that it has no choice in its food; that it is fond to talk even of its own faults and vices, as what will excite surprise and draw attention, and what will pass at worst for openness and candour.

It was this abuse and perversion, which vanity makes even of hypocrisy, which has driven Rousseau to record a life not so much as chequered, or spotted here and there, with virtues, or even distinguished by a single good action. It is such a life he chooses to offer to the attention of mankind. It is such a life, that, with a wild defiance, he flings in the face of his Creator, whom he acknowledges only to brave. Your assembly, knowing how much more powerful example is found than precept, has chosen this man (by his own account without a single virtue) for a model. To him they erect their first statue. From him they commence their series of honours and distinctions.

It is that new invented virtue which your masters canonize, that led their moral hero constantly to exhaust the stores of his powerful rhetoric in the expression of universal benevolence; whilst his heart was incapable of harbouring one spark of common parental affection. Benevolence to the whole species, and want of feeling for every individual with whom the professors come in contact, form the character of the new philosophy. Setting up for an unsocial independence, this their hero of vanity refuses the just price of common labour, as well as the tribute which opulence owes to genius, and which, when paid, honours the giver and the receiver; and then he pleads his beggary as an excuse for his crimes. He melts with tenderness for those only who touch him by the remotest relation, and then, without one natural pang, casts away, as a sort of offal and excrement, the spawn of his disgustful amours, and sends his children to the hospital of foundlings. The bear loves, licks, and forms her young; but bears are not philosophers. Vanity, however, finds its account in reversing the train of our natural feelings. Thousands admire the sentimental writer; the affectionate father is hardly known in his parish.

Under this philosophic instructor in the *ethics of vanity*, they have attempted in France a regeneration of the moral constitution of man. Statesmen, like your present rulers, exist by every thing which is spurious, fictitious, and false; by every thing which takes the man from his house, and sets him on a stage, which makes him up an artificial creature, with painted theatric sentiments, fit to be seen by the glare of candle-light, and formed to be contemplated at a due distance. Vanity is too apt to prevail in all of us, and in all countries. To the improvement of Frenchmen it seems not absolutely necessary that it should be taught upon system. But it is plain that the present rebellion was its legitimate offspring, and it is piously fed by that rebellion with a daily dole.

If the system of institution recommended by the assembly, is false and theatric, it is because their system of government is of the same character. To that, and to that alone,

it is strictly conformable. To understand either, we must connect the morals with the politics of the legislators. Your practical philosophers, systematic in every thing, have wisely began at the source. As the relation between parents and children is the first among the elements of vulgar, natural morality,* they erect statues to a wild, ferocious, low-minded, hard-hearted father, of fine general feelings; a lover of his kind, but a hater of his kindred. Your masters reject the duties of this vulgar relation, as contrary to liberty; as not founded in the social compact; and not binding according to the rights of men; because the relation is not, of course, the result of *free election*; never so on the side of the children, not always on the part of the parents.

The next relation which they regenerate by their statues to Rousseau, is that which is next in sanctity to that of a father. They differ from those old-fashioned thinkers, who considered pedagogues as sober and venerable characters, and allied to the parental. The moralists of the dark times, *preceptorum sancti voluere parentis esse loco*. In this age of light, they teach the people, that preceptors ought to be in the place of gallants. They systematically corrupt a very corruptible race, (for some time a growing nuisance among you,) a set of pert petulant literators, to whom, instead of their proper, but severe unostentatious duties, they assign the brilliant part of men of wit and pleasure, of gay, young, military sparks, and danglers at toilets. They call on the rising generation in France, to take a sympathy in the adventures and fortunes, and they endeavour to engage their sensibility on the side of pedagogues, who betray the most awful family trusts, and vitiate their female pupils. They teach the people, that the debauchers of virgins, almost in the arms of their parents, may be safe inmates in their house, and even fit guardians of the honour of those husbands who succeed legally to the office which the young literators had preoccupied, without asking leave of law or conscience.

Thus they dispose of all the family relations of parents and children, husbands and wives. Through this same instructor, by whom they corrupt the morals, they corrupt the taste. Taste and elegance, though they are reckoned only among the smaller and secondary morals, yet are of no mean importance in the regulation of life. A moral taste is not of force to turn vice into virtue; but it recommends virtue with something like the blandishments of pleasure; and it infinitely abates the evils of vice. Rousseau, a writer of great force and vivacity, is totally destitute of taste in any sense of the word. Your masters who are his scholars, conceive that all refinement has an aristocratic character. The last age had exhausted all its powers in giving a grace and nobleness to our natural appetites, and in raising them into an higher class and order than seemed justly to belong to them. Through Rousseau, your masters are resolved to destroy these aristocratic prejudices. The passion called love, has so general and powerful an influence; it makes so much of the entertainment, and indeed so much the occupation of that part of life which decides the character for ever, that the mode and the principles on which it engages the sympathy, and strikes the imagination, become of the utmost importance to the morals and manners of every society. Your rulers were well aware of this; and in their system of changing your manners to accommodate them to their politics, they found nothing so convenient as Rousseau. Through him they teach men to love after the fashion of philosophers; that is, they teach to men, to Frenchmen, a love without gallantry; a love without any thing of that fine flower of youthfulness and gentility, which places it, if not among the virtues, among the ornaments of life. Instead of this passion, naturally allied to grace and manners, they infuse into their youth an unfashioned, indelicate, sour, gloomy, ferocious medley of pedantry and lewdness; of metaphysical speculations, blended with the coarsest sensuality. Such is the general morality of the passions to be found in their famous philosopher, in his famous work of philosophic gallantry the *Nouvelle Eloise*.

When the fence from the gallantry of preceptors is broken down, and your families are no longer protected by decent pride, and salutary domestic prejudice, there is but one step to a frightful corruption. The rulers in the national assembly are in good hopes that the females of the first families in France, may become an easy prey to dancing-masters, fiddlers, pattern-drawers, friseurs, and valets de chambre, and other active citizens of that description, who having the entry into your houses, and being half domesticated by their situation, may be blended with you by regular and irregular relations. By a law, they have made these people their equals. By adopting

* Filiola tua te delectari lætor et probari tibi φυσικην esse την προς τα τεκνα: etenim, si hæc non est, nulla potest homini esse ad hominem natura adjunctio: qua sublata vitæ societas tollitur. Valete Patron (Rousseau) et tui condiscipuli! (L'Assemblee Nationale.)—Cic. Ep. ad Atticum.

the sentiments of Rousseau, they have made them your rivals. In this manner, these great legislators complete their plan of levelling, and establish their rights of men on a sure foundation.

I am certain that the writings of Rousseau lead directly to this kind of shameful evil. I have often wondered how he comes to be so much more admired and followed on the continent than he is here. Perhaps a secret charm in the language may have its share in this extraordinary difference. We certainly perceive, and to a degree we feel, in this writer, a style glowing, animated, enthusiastic; at the same time that we find it lax, diffuse, and not in the best taste of composition; all the members of the piece being pretty equally laboured and expanded, without any due selection or subordination of parts. He is generally too much on the stretch, and his manner has little variety. We cannot rest upon any of his works, though they contain observations which occasionally discover a considerable insight into human nature. But his doctrines, on the whole, are so inapplicable to real life and manners, that we never dream of drawing from them any rule for laws or conduct, or for fortifying or illustrating any thing by a reference to his opinions. They have with us the fate of older paradoxes,

Cum ventum ad *verum* est *sensus moresque* repugnant,
Atque ipsa utilitas justi prope mater etæqui.

Perhaps bold speculations are more acceptable, because more new to you than to us, who have been long since satiated with them. We continue, as in the two last ages, to read more generally, than I believe is now done on the continent, the authors of sound antiquity. These occupy our minds. They give us another taste and turn; and will not suffer us to be more than transiently amused with paradoxical morality. It is not that I consider this writer as wholly destitute of just notions. Among his irregularities, it must be reckoned that he is sometimes moral, and moral in a very sublime strain. But the *general spirit and tendency* of his works is mischievous; and the more mischievous for this mixture: For perfect depravity of sentiment is not reconcilable with eloquence; and the mind (though corruptible, not complexionally vicious) would reject and throw off with disgust, a lesson of pure and unmixed evil. These writers make even virtue a pander to vice.

However, I less consider the author, than the system of the assembly in perverting morality, through his means. This I confess makes me nearly despair of any attempt upon the minds of their followers, through reason, honour, or conscience. The great object of your tyrants, is to destroy the gentlemen of France; and for that purpose they destroy, to the best of their power, all the effect of those relations which may render considerable men powerful or even safe. To destroy that order, they vitiate the whole community. That no means may exist of confederating against their tyranny, by the false sympathies of this Nouvelle Eloise, they endeavour to subvert those principles of domestic trust and fidelity, which form the discipline of social life. They propagate principles by which every servant may think it, if not his duty, at least his privilege, to betray his master. By these principles, every considerable father of a family loses the sanctuary of his house. *Debet sua cuique domus esse perfugium tutissimum*, says the law, which your legislators have taken so much pains first to decry, then to repeal. They destroy all the tranquillity and security of domestic life; turning the asylum of the house into a gloomy prison, where the father of the family must drag out a miserable existence, endangered in proportion to the apparent means of his safety; where he is worse than solitary in a crowd of domestics, and more apprehensive from his servants and inmates, than from the hired blood-thirsty mob without doors, who are ready to pull him to the lanterne.

It is thus, and for the same end, that they endeavoured to destroy that tribunal of conscience which exists independently of edicts and decrees. Your despots govern by terrour. They know, that he who fears God fears nothing else; and therefore they eradicate from the mind, through their Voltaire, their Helvetius, and the rest of that infamous gang, that only sort of fear which generates true courage. Their object is, that their fellow-citizens may be under the dominion of no awe, but that of their committee of research, and of their lanterne.

Having found the advantage of assassination in the formation of their tyranny, it is the grand resource in which they trust for the support of it. Whoever opposes any of their proceedings, or is suspected of a design to oppose them, is to answer it with his life, or the lives of his wife and children. This infamous, cruel, and cowardly practice of assassination, they have the impudence to call *merciful*. They boast that they operated their usurpation rather by terrour than by force; and that few seasonable murders have pre-

vented the bloodshed of many battles. There is no doubt they will extend these acts of mercy whenever they see an occasion. Dreadful, however, will be the consequences of their attempt to avoid the evils of war, by the merciful policy of murder. If, by effectual punishment of the guilty, they do not wholly disavow that practice, and the threat of it too, as any part of their policy; if ever a foreign prince enters into France, he must enter it as into a country of assassins. The mode of civilized war will not be practised; nor are the French who act on the present system entitled to expect it. They, whose known policy is to assassinate every citizen whom they suspect to be discontented by their tyranny, and to corrupt the soldiery of every open enemy, must look for no modified hostility. All war, which is not battle, will be military execution. This will beget acts of retaliation from you; and every retaliation will beget a new revenge. The hell-hounds of war, on all sides, will be uncoupled and unmuzzled. The new school of murder and barbarism, set up in Paris, having destroyed (so far as in it lies) all the other manners and principles which have hitherto civilized Europe, will destroy also the mode of civilized war, which, more than any thing else, has distinguished the Christian world. Such is the approaching golden age, which the Virgil* of your assembly has sung to his Pollios!

In such a situation of your political, your civil, and your social morals and manners, how can you be hurt by the freedom of any discussion? Caution is for those who have something to lose. What I have said to justify myself in not apprehending any ill consequence from a free discussion of the absurd consequences which flow from the relation of the lawful king to the usurped constitution, will apply to my vindication with regard to the exposure I have made of the state of the army under the same sophistic usurpation. The present tyrants want no arguments to prove, what they must daily feel, that no good army can exist on their principles. They are in no want of a monitor to suggest to them the policy of getting rid of the army, as well as of the king, whenever they are in a condition to affect that measure. What hopes may be entertained of your army for the restoration of your liberties, I know not. At present, yielding obedience to the pretended orders of a king, who, they are perfectly apprised, has no will, and who never can issue a mandate which is not intended, in the first operation, or in its certain consequences, for his own destruction, your army seems to make one of the principal links in the chain of that servitude of anarchy, by which a cruel usurpation holds an undone people at once in bondage and confusion.

You ask me what I think of the conduct of general Monk. How this affects your case, I cannot tell. I doubt whether you possess, in France, any persons of a capacity to serve the French monarchy in the same manner in which Monk served the monarchy of England. The army which Monk commanded had been formed by Cromwell to a perfection of discipline which perhaps has never been exceeded. That army was besides of an excellent composition. The soldiers were men of extraordinary piety after their mode, of the greatest regularity, and even severity of manners; brave in the field, but modest, quiet and orderly, in their quarters; men who abhorred the idea of assassinating their officers or any other persons; and who (they at least who served in this island) were firmly attached to those generals, by whom they were well treated and ably commanded. Such an army, once gained, might be depended on. I doubt much, if you could now find a Monk, whether a Monk could find in France such an army.

I certainly agree with you, that in all probability we owe our whole constitution to the restoration of the English monarchy. The state of things from which Monk relieved England, was however by no means, at that time, so deplorable in any sense, as yours is now, and under the present sway is likely to continue. Cromwell had delivered England from anarchy. His government, though military and despotic, had been regular and orderly. Under the iron, and under the yoke, the soil yielded its produce. After his death, the evils of anarchy were rather dreaded than felt. Every man was yet safe in his house and in his property. But it must be admitted, that Monk freed this nation from great and just apprehensions both of future anarchy and of probable tyranny in some form or other. The king whom he gave us was indeed the very reverse of your benignant sovereign, who in reward for his attempt to bestow liberty on his subjects, languishes himself in prison. The person given to us by Monk was a man without any sense of his duty as a prince; without any regard to the dignity of his crown; without any love to his people; dissolute, false, venal, and destitute of any positive good quality whatsoever, except a pleasant temper, and the manners of a gentleman. Yet the

* Mirabeau's speech concerning universal peace.

restoration of our monarchy, even in the person of such a prince, was every thing to us; for without monarchy in England, most certainly we never can enjoy either peace or liberty. It was under this conviction that the very first regular step which we took on the revolution of 1688, was to fill the throne with a real king; and even before it could be done in due form, the chiefs of the nation did not attempt themselves to exercise authority so much as by *interim*. They instantly requested the prince of Orange to take the government on himself. The throne was not effectively vacant for an hour.

Your fundamental laws, as well as ours, suppose a monarchy. Your zeal, Sir, in standing so firmly for it as you have done, shews not only a sacred respect for your honour and fidelity, but a well-informed attachment to the real welfare and true liberties of your country. I have expressed myself ill, if I have given you cause to imagine, that I prefer the conduct of those who have retired from this warfare to your behaviour, who, with a courage and constancy almost supernatural, have struggled against tyranny, and kept the field to the last. You see I have corrected the exceptionable part in the edition which I now send you. Indeed, in such terrible extremities as yours, it is not easy to say, in a political view, what line of conduct is the most advisable. In that state of things, I cannot bring myself severely to condemn persons who are wholly unable to bear so much as the sight of those men in the throne of legislation, who are only fit to be the objects of criminal justice. If fatigue, if disgust, if unsurmountable nausea, drive them away from such spectacles, *ubi miseriarum pars non minima erat, videre et aspici*, I cannot blame them. He must have an heart of adamant who could hear a set of traitors puffed up with unexpected and undeserved power, obtained by an ignoble, unmanly, and perfidious rebellion, treating their honest fellow-citizens as rebels, because they refused to bind themselves through their conscience, against the dictates of conscience itself, and had declined to swear an active compliance with their own ruin. How could a man of common flesh and blood endure, that those, who but the other day had skulked unobserved in their antichambers, scornfully insulting men, illustrious in their rank, sacred in their function, and venerable in their character, now in decline of life, and swimming on the wrecks of their fortunes, that those miscreants should tell such men scornfully and outrageously, after they had robbed them of all their property, that it is more than enough if they are allowed what will keep them from absolute famine, and that for the rest, they must let their gray hairs fall over the plough, to make out a scanty subsistence with the labour of their hands! Last, and worst, who could endure to bear this unnatural, insolent, and savage despotism called liberty? If, at this distance, sitting quietly by my fire, I cannot read their decrees and speeches without indignation, shall I condemn those who have fled from the actual sight and hearing of all these horrours? No, no! mankind has no title to demand that we should be slaves to their guilt and insolence; or that we should serve them in spite of themselves. Minds, sore with the poignant sense of insulted virtue, filled with high disdain against the pride of triumphant baseness, often have it not in their choice to stand their ground. Their complexion (which might defy the rack) cannot go through such a trial. Something very high must fortify men to that proof. But when I am driven to comparison, surely I cannot hesitate for a moment to prefer to such men as are common, those heroes, who, in the midst of despair, perform all the tasks of hope; who subdue their feelings to their duties; who, in the cause of humanity, liberty, and honour, abandon all the satisfactions of life, and every day incur a fresh risk of life itself. Do me the justice to believe that I never can prefer any fastidious virtue (virtue still) to the unconquered perseverance, to the affectionate patience of those who watch day and night, by the bed-side of their delirious country, who, for their love to that dear and venerable name, bear all the disgusts, and all the buffets they receive from their frantic mother. Sir, I do look on you as true martyrs; I regard you as soldiers who act far more in the spirit of our Commander in chief, and the Captain of our salvation, than those who have left you; though I must first bolt myself very thoroughly, and know that I could do better, before I can censure them. I assure you, Sir, that, when I consider your unconquerable fidelity to your sovereign, and to your country; the courage, fortitude, magnanimity, and long-suffering of yourself, and the Abbé Maury, and of Mr. Cazales, and of many worthy persons of all orders, in your assembly, I forget, in the lustre of these great qualities, that on your side has been displayed an eloquence so rational, manly, and convincing, that no time or country, perhaps, has ever excelled. But your talents disappear in my admiration of your virtues.

As to Mr. Mounier and Mr. Lally, I have always wished to do justice to their parts, and

their eloquence, and the general purity of their motives. Indeed I saw very well from the beginning, the mischiefs which, with all these talents and good intentions, they would do their country, through their confidence in systems. But their distemper was an epidemic malady. They were young and inexperienced; and when will young and inexperienced men learn caution and distrust of themselves? And when will men, young or old, if suddenly raised to far higher power than that which absolute kings and emperours commonly enjoy, learn any thing like moderation? Monarchs in general respect some settled order of things, which they find it difficult to move from its basis, and to which they are obliged to conform, even when there are no positive limitations to their power. These gentlemen conceived that they were chosen to new model the state, and even the whole order of civil society itself. No wonder that *they* entertained dangerous visions, when the king's ministers, trustees for the sacred deposit of the monarchy, were so infected with the contagion of project and system, (I can hardly think it black premeditated treachery,) that they publicly advertised for plans and schemes of government, as if they were to provide for the rebuilding of an hospital that had been burned down. What was this, but to unchain the fury of rash speculation among a people, of itself but too apt to be guided by a heated imagination, and a wild spirit of adventure?

The fault of Mr. Mounier and Mr. Lally was very great; but it was very general. If those gentlemen stopped when they came to the brink of the gulph of guilt and public misery, that yawned before them in the abyss of these dark and bottomless speculations, I forgive their first errour: in that they were involved with many. Their repentance was their own.

They who consider Mounier and Lally as deserters, must regard themselves as murderers and as traitors: for from what else than murder and treason did they desert? For my part, I honour them for not having carried mistake into crime. If, indeed, I thought that they were not cured by experience; that they were not made sensible that those who would reform a state, ought to assume some actual constitution of government which is to be reformed; if they are not at length satisfied that it is become a necessary preliminary to liberty in France, to commence by the re-establishment of order and property of *every* kind, and, through the re-establishment of their monarchy, of every one of the old habitual distinctions and classes of the state; if they do not see that these classes are not to be confounded in order to be afterwards revived and separated; if they are not convinced that the scheme of parochial and club governments takes up the state at the wrong end, and is a low and senseless contrivance, (as making the sole constitution of a supreme power,) I should then allow, that their early rashness ought to be remembered to the last moment of their lives.

You gently reprehend me, because in holding out the picture of your disastrous situation, I suggest no plan for a remedy. Alas! Sir, the proposition of plans, without an attention to circumstances, is the very cause of all your misfortunes; and never shall you find me aggravating, by the infusion of any speculations of mine, the evils which have arisen from the speculations of others. Your malady, in this respect, is a disorder of repletion. You seem to think, that my keeping back my poor ideas, may arise from an indifference to the welfare of a foreign, and sometimes an hostile nation. No, Sir, I faithfully assure you, my reserve is owing to no such causes. Is this letter, swelled to a second book, a mark of national antipathy, or even of national indifference? I should act altogether in the spirit of the same caution, in a similar state of our own domestic affairs. If I were to venture any advice, in any case, it would be my best. The sacred duty of an adviser (one of the most inviolable that exists) would lead me, towards a real enemy, to act as if my best friend were the party concerned. But I dare not risk a speculation with no better view of your affairs than at present I can command; my caution is not from disregard, but from solicitude for your welfare. It is suggested solely from my dread of becoming the author of inconsiderate counsel.

It is not, that as this strange series of actions has passed before my eyes, I have not indulged my mind in a great variety of political speculations concerning them. But compelled by no such positive duty as does not permit me to evade an opinion; called upon by no ruling power, without authority as I am, and without confidence, I should ill answer my own ideas of what would become myself, or what would be serviceable to others, if I were, as a volunteer, to obtrude any project of mine upon a nation, to whose circumstances I could not be sure it might be applicable.

Permit me to say, that if I were as confident, as I ought to be diffident in my own loose, general ideas, I never should venture to broach them, if but at twenty leagues distance from the centre of your affairs. I must see with my own eyes, I must, in a manner, touch with

my own hands, not only the fixed, but the momentary circumstances, before I could venture to suggest any political project whatsoever. I must know the power and disposition to accept, to execute, to persevere. I must see all the aids, and all the obstacles. I must see the means of correcting the plan, where correctives would be wanted. I must see the things; I must see the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of these to the design, the very best speculative projects might become not only useless but mischievous. Plans must be made for men. We cannot think of making men, and binding nature to our designs. People at a distance must judge ill of men. They do not always answer to their reputation when you approach them. Nay, the perspective varies, and shews them quite otherwise than you thought them. At a distance, if we judge uncertainly of men, we must judge worse of *opportunities*, which continually vary their shapes and colours, and pass away like clouds. The Eastern politicians never do any thing without the opinion of the astrologers on the *fortunate moment*. They are in the right, if they can do no better; for the opinion of fortune is something towards commanding it. Statesmen of a more judicious prescience, look for the fortunate moment too; but they seek it, not in the conjunctions and oppositions of planets, but in the conjunctions and oppositions of men and things. These form their almanac.

To illustrate the mischief of a wise plan, without any attention to means and circumstances, it is not necessary to go farther than to your recent history. In the condition in which France was found three years ago, what better system could be proposed, what less, even savouring of wild theory, what fitter to provide for all the exigencies, whilst it reformed all the abuses of government, than the convention of the states general? I think nothing better could be imagined. But I have censured, and do still presume to censure your parliament of Paris, for not having suggested to the king, that this proper measure was of all measures the most critical and arduous; one in which the utmost circumspection, and the greatest number of precautions, were the most absolutely necessary. The very confession that a government wants either amendment in its confirmation, or relief to great distress, causes it to lose half its reputation, and as great a proportion of its strength as depends upon that reputation. It was therefore necessary, first to put government out of danger, whilst at its own desire it suffered such an operation, as a general reform at the hands of those who were much more filled with a sense of the disease, than provided with rational means of a cure.

It may be said, that this care, and these precautions, were more naturally the duty of the king's ministers, than that of the parliament. They were so; but every man must answer in his estimation for the advice he gives, when he puts the conduct of his measure into hands who he does not know will execute his plans according to his ideas. Three or four ministers were not to be trusted with the being of the French monarchy, of all the orders, and of all the distinctions, and all the property of the kingdom. What must be the prudence of those who could think, in the then known temper of the people of Paris, of assembling the states at a place situated as Versailles?

The parliament of Paris did worse than to inspire this blind confidence into the king. For, as if names were things, they took no notice of (indeed they rather countenanced) the deviations which were manifest in the execution, from the true ancient principles of the plan which they recommended. These deviations (as guardians of the ancient laws, usages, and constitution of the kingdom) the parliament of Paris ought not to have suffered, without the strongest remonstrances to the throne. It ought to have sounded the alarm to the whole nation, as it had often done on things of infinitely less importance. Under pretence of resuscitating the ancient constitution, the parliament saw one of the strongest acts of innovation, and the most leading in its consequences, carried into effect before their eyes; and an innovation through the medium of despotism; that is, they suffered the king's ministers to new model the whole representation of the *tiers etat*, and, in a great measure, that of the clergy too, and to destroy the ancient proportions of the orders. These changes, unquestionably the king had no right to make; and here the parliaments failed in their duty, and along with their country, have perished by this failure.

What a number of faults have led to this multitude of misfortunes, and almost all from this one source, that of considering certain general maxims, without attending to circumstances, to times, to places, to conjunctures, and to actors! If we do not attend scrupulously to all these, the medicine of to-day becomes the poison of to-morrow. If any measure was in the abstract better than another, it was to call the states—*ea visa salus morientibus una.*—Certainly it had the appearance.—But see

the consequences of not attending to critical moments, of not regarding the symptoms which discriminate diseases, and which distinguish constitutions, complexions, and humours:

> Mox erat hoc ipsum exitio; furiisque refecti,
> Ardebant; ipsique suos, jam morte sub aegra,
> Discissos nudis laniabant dentibus artus.

Thus the potion which was given to strengthen the constitution, to heal divisions, and to compose the minds of men, became the source of debility, phrenzy, discord, and utter dissolution.

In this, perhaps, I have answered, I think, another of your questions—Whether the British constitution is adapted to your circumstances? When I praised the British constitution, and wished it to be well studied, I did not mean that its exteriour form and positive arrangement should become a model for you, or for any people servilely to copy. I meant to recommend the *principles* from which it has grown, and the policy on which it has been progressively improved out of elements common to you and to us. I am sure it is no visionary theory of mine. It is not an advice that subjects you to the hazard of any experiment. I believed the ancient principles to be wise in all cases of a large empire that would be free. I thought you possessed our principles in your old forms, in as great perfection as we did originally. If your states agreed (as I think they did) with your circumstances, they were best for you. As you had a constitution formed upon principles similar to ours, my idea was, that you might have improved them as we have done, conforming them to the state and exigencies of the times, and the condition of property in your country, having the conservation of that property, and the substantial basis of your monarchy, as principal objects in all your reforms.

I do not advise an house of lords to you. Your ancient course by representatives of the noblesse (in your circumstances) appears to me rather a better institution. I know, that with you, a set of men of rank have betrayed their constituents, their honour, their trust, their king, and their country, and levelled themselves with their footmen, that through this degradation they might afterwards put themselves above their natural equals. Some of these persons have entertained a project, that in reward of this their black perfidy and corruption, they may be chosen to give rise to a new order, and to establish themselves into an house of lords. Do you think that, under the name of a British constitution, I mean to recommend to you such lords, made of such kind of stuff? I do not however include in this description all of those who are fond of this scheme.

If you were now to form such an house of peers, it would bear, in my opinion, but little resemblance to ours in its origin, character, or the purposes which it might answer, at the same time that it would destroy your true natural nobility. But if you are not in a condition to frame an house of lords, still less are you capable, in my opinion, of framing any thing which virtually and substantially could be answerable (for the purposes of a stable, regular government) to our house of commons. That house is, within itself, a much more subtle and artificial combination of parts and powers, than people are generally aware of. What knits it to the other members of the constitution; what fits it to be at once the great support, and the great controul of government; what makes it of such admirable service to that monarchy which, if it limits, it secures and strengthens, would require a long discourse, belonging to the leisure of a contemplative man, not to one whose duty it is to join in communicating practically to the people the blessings of such a constitution.

Your *tiers etat* was not in effect and substance a house of commons. You stood in absolute need of something else to supply the manifest defects in such a body as your tiers etat. On a sober and dispassionate view of your old constitution, as connected with all the present circumstances, I was fully persuaded, that the crown, standing as things have stood (and are likely to stand, if you are to have any monarchy at all) was and is incapable, alone and by itself, of holding a just balance between the two orders, and at the same time of effecting the interiour and exteriour purposes of a protecting government. I, whose leading principle it is, in a reformation of the state, to make use of existing materials, am of opinion, that the representation of the clergy, as a separate order, was an institution which touched all the orders more nearly than any of them touched the other; that it was well fitted to connect them; and to hold a place in any wise monarchical commonwealth. If I refer you to your original constitution, and think it, as I do, substantially a good one, I do not amuse you in this, more than in other things, with any inventions of mine. A certain intemperance of intellect is the disease of the time, and the source of all its other diseases. I will keep myself as untainted by it as I can. Your architects build without a foundation. I would readily lend an helping hand to any superstructure, when once this is effectually secured—but I would first say δος που στω.

You think, Sir, and you might think rightly,

upon the first view of the theory, that to provide for the exigencies of an empire, so situated and related as that of France, its king ought to be invested with powers very much superiour to those which the king of England possesses under the letter of our constitution. Every degree of power necessary to the state, and not destructive to the rational and moral freedom of individuals, to that personal liberty, and personal security, which contribute so much to the vigour, the prosperity, the happiness, and the dignity of a nation—every degree of power which does not suppose the total absence of all controul, and all responsibility on the part of ministers,—a king of France, in common sense, ought to possess. But whether the exact measure of authority, assigned by the letter of the law to the king of Great Britain, can answer to the exteriour or interiour purposes of the French monarchy, is a point which I cannot venture to judge upon. Here, both in the power given, and its limitations, we have always cautiously felt our way. The parts of our constitution have gradually, and almost insensibly, in a long course of time, accommodated themselves to each other, and to their common, as well as to their separate purposes. But this adaptation of contending parts, as it has not been in ours, so it can never be in your's, or in any country, the effect of a single instantaneous regulation, and no sound heads could ever think of doing it in that manner.

I believe, Sir, that many on the continent altogether mistake the condition of a king of Great Britian. He is a real king, and not an executive officer. If he will not trouble himself with contemptible details, nor wish to degrade himself by becoming a party in little squabbles, I am far from sure, that a king of Great Britain, in whatever concerns him as a king, or indeed as a rational man, who combines his public interest with his personal satisfaction, does not possess a more real, solid, extensive power, than the king of France was possessed of before this miserable revolution. The direct power of the king of England is considerable. His indirect, and far more certain power, is great indeed. He stands in need of nothing towards dignity; of nothing towards splendour; of nothing towards authority; of nothing at all towards consideration abroad. When was it that a king of England wanted wherewithal to make him respected, courted, or perhaps even feared in every state of Europe?

I am constantly of opinion, that your states, in three orders, on the footing on which they stood in 1614, were capable of being brought into a proper and harmonious combination with royal authority. This constitution by estates, was the natural and only just representation of France. It grew out of the habitual conditions, relations, and reciprocal claims of men. It grew out of the circumstances of the country, and out of the state of property. The wretched scheme of your present masters, is not to fit the constitution to the people, but wholly to destroy conditions, to dissolve relations, to change the state of the nation, and to subvert property, in order to fit their country to their theory of a constitution.

Until you make out practically that great work, a combination of opposing forces, "a work of labour long, and endless praise," the utmost caution ought to have been used in the reduction of the royal power, which alone was capable of holding together the comparatively heterogeneous mass of your states. But at this day, all these considerations are unseasonable. To what end should we discuss the limitations of royal power? Your king is in prison. Why speculate on the measure and standard of liberty? I doubt much, very much indeed, whether France is at all ripe for liberty on any standard. Men are qualified for civil liberty, in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love to justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exist unless a controuling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.

This sentence the prevalent part of your countrymen execute on themselves. They possessed, not long since, what was next to freedom, a mild paternal monarchy. They despised it for its weakness. They were offered a well-poised free constitution. It did not suit their taste or their temper. They carved for themselves; they flew out, murdered, robbed, and rebelled. They have succeeded, and put over their country an insolent tyranny, made up of cruel and inexorable masters, and that too of a description hitherto not known in the world. The powers and policies by which they have succeeded, are not those of great statesmen, or great military commanders, but the practices of incendiaries, assassins, house-

breakers, robbers, spreaders of false news, forgers of false orders from authority, and other delinquencies, of which ordinary justice takes cognizance. Accordingly the spirit of their rule is exactly correspondent to the means by which they obtained it. They act more in the manner of thieves who have got possession of a house, than of conquerors who have subdued a nation.

Opposed to these, in appearance, but in appearance only, is another band, who call themselves the *moderate*. These, if I conceive rightly of their conduct, are a set of men who approve heartily of the whole new constitution, but wish to lay heavy on the most atrocious of those crimes, by which this fine constitution of theirs has been obtained. They are a sort of people who affect to proceed as if they thought that men may deceive without fraud, rob without injustice, and overturn every thing without violence. They are men who would usurp the government of their country with decency and moderation. In fact they are nothing more or better, than men engaged in desperate designs, with feeble minds. They are not honest; they are only ineffectual and unsystematic in their iniquity. They are persons who want not the dispositions, but the energy and vigour that is necessary for great evil machinations. They find that in such designs they fall at best into a secondary rank, and others take the place and lead in usurpation, which they are not qualified to obtain or to hold. They envy to their companions the natural fruit of their crimes; they join to run them down with the hue and cry of mankind, which pursues their common offences; and then hope to mount into their places on the credit of the sobriety with which they shew themselves disposed to carry on what may seem most plausible in the mischievous projects they pursue in common. But these men are naturally despised by those who have heads to know, and hearts that are able to go through the necessary demands of bold, wicked enterprises. They are naturally classed below the latter description, and will only be used by them as inferiour instruments. They will be only the Fairfaxes of your Cromwells. If they mean honestly, why do they not strengthen the arms of honest men, to support their ancient, legal, wise, and free government, given to them in the spring of 1788, against the inventions of craft, and the theories of ignorance and folly? If they do not, they must continue the scorn of both parties; sometimes the tool, sometimes the incumbrance of that, whose views they approve, whose conduct they decry. These people are only made to be the sport of tyrants. They never can obtain or communicate freedom.

You ask me too, whether we have a committee of research. No, Sir,—God forbid! It is the necessary instrument of tyranny and usurpation; and therefore I do not wonder that it has had an early establishment under your present lords. We do not want it.

Excuse my length. I have been somewhat occupied since I was honoured with your letter; and I should not have been able to answer it all, but for the holidays, which have given me means of enjoying the leisure of the country. I am called to duties which I am neither able nor willing to evade. I must soon return to my old conflict with the corruptions and oppressions which have prevailed in our eastern dominions. I must turn myself wholly from those of France.

In England, we *cannot* work so hard as Frenchmen. Frequent relaxation is necessary to us. You are naturally more intense in your application. I did not know this part of your national character, until I went into France in 1773. At present, this your disposition to labour is rather encreased than lessened. In your assembly you do not allow yourselves a recess even on Sundays. We have two days in the week, besides the festivals; and besides five or six months of the summer and autumn. This continued unremitted effort of the members of your assembly, I take to be one among the causes of the mischief they have done. They who always labour can have no true judgment. You never give yourselves time to cool. You can never survey, from its proper point of sight, the work you have finished, before you decree its final execution. You can never plan the future by the past. You never go into the country soberly and dispassionately to observe the effect of your measures on their objects. You cannot feel distinctly how far the people are rendered better and improved, or more miserable and depraved, by what you have done. You cannot see with your own eyes the sufferings and afflictions you cause. You know them but at a distance, on the statements of those who always flatter the reigning power, and who, amid their representations of the grievances, inflame your minds against those who are oppressed. These are among the effects of unremitted labour, when men exhaust their attention, burn out their candles, and are left in the dark.—*Malo meorum negligentiam, quam istorum obscuram diligentiam.*

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND BURKE.

Beaconsfield,
January 19th, 1791.

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